



GREEN
PARTY **US**

HOME > PLATFORM

II. Social Justice

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People have a right to a home and to be secure in their tenancy. However the supply of affordable housing is not meeting the need, while in an era of increasing deregulation, many tenants are losing important legal protections.

Historically, America led the world in establishing a society with democratic

values such as equal opportunity and protection from discrimination. Today, however, our country is among the most extreme examples of industrialized nations that have a widening gap between the wealthy and the rest of its citizenry — the working poor, the struggling middle class, and those who increasingly cannot make ends meet.

Our public schools, from kindergarten through college, are forced to cut back countless programs and services. Fees for community colleges are up sharply, and many public universities must turn away qualified students. More than 50 million Americans have no medical insurance coverage. The crisis in publicly subsidized housing is intensifying, while publicly funded "corporate welfare" continues unabated. Our tax code favors the wealthy. Our criminal justice system assigns long prison terms to hundreds of thousands of perpetrators of victimless crimes, such as selling marijuana. Our civil liberties of privacy and free speech are impaired by the excesses of the USA PATRIOT Act and kindred new laws that use a national tragedy (the attacks on September 11, 2001) as an excuse to impose ubiquitous surveillance and control over citizens. In addition, discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or race continues to sap the potential of our society and to violate personal dignity.

Feelings of isolation and helplessness are common in America today. Children are increasingly shaped by an "electronic childhood" with little direct experience of nature and free play. Our families are scattered, our popular culture is crassly manipulated by the profit motives of increasingly concentrated media conglomerates, and our sense of community is a pale shadow of what earlier generations of Americans knew.

The Green Party strongly believes that quality of life is determined not only by material aspects that can be measured and counted, but also by elements that cannot be quantified. We firmly support the separation of church and state, but we also acknowledge the spiritual dimension of life, and we honor the cultivation of various types of spiritual experience in our diverse society.

We believe that artistic expression and a thriving structure of art institutions are key to community well-being. We believe that a deep and broad embrace of nonviolence is the only effective way to stop cycles of violence, from the home

to the streets to the international level. We advocate a diverse system of education that would introduce children early to the wonders of the Great School (Nature), and would cultivate the wisdom of eco-education, eco-economics, eco-politics, and eco-culture. We seek to protect our children from the corrosive effects of mass culture that trains them to regard themselves first and foremost as consumers.

We support the shift in modern medicine to include healing through complementary therapies and engagement with the Great Hospital (Nature). We seek, in short, to facilitate the healthy unfolding of the person within the unfolding story of the family, community, bioregion, state, nation, and Earth community.

A. Civil Rights and Equal Rights

The foundation of any democratic society is the guarantee that each member of society has equal rights. Respect for our constitutionally protected rights is our best defense against discrimination and the abuse of power. Also, we recognize an intimate connection between our rights as individuals and our responsibilities to our neighbors and the planet. The Green Party shall strive to secure universal and effective recognition and observance of the principles and spirit expressed in the United National Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an international standard that all nations must meet.

One of our key values is respect for diversity. We are committed to establishing relationships that honor diversity; that support the self-definition and self-determination of all people; that consciously confront the barriers of racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, class oppression, ageism, and ableism, and the many ways that our culture and laws separate us from working together. We support affirmative action to remedy discrimination, to protect constitutional rights, and to provide equal opportunity under the law.

1. Women's Rights

Since the beginning of what we call civilization, when men's dominance over women was firmly established, until the present day, our history has been marred with oppression of and brutality to women. The Green Party deplores

this system of male domination, known as patriarchy, in all its forms, both subtle and overt – from oppression, inequality, and discrimination to all forms of violence against women and girls including rape, trafficking, forced sex which is also rape, slavery, prostitution and violence against women within marriage and relationships and in all institutions. The change the world is crying for cannot occur unless women's voices are heard. Democracy cannot work without equality for women, which provides equal participation and representation. It took an extraordinary and ongoing fight over 72 years for women to win the right to vote. However, the Equal Rights Amendment, first introduced in 1923, has still not been ratified by 2012, representing a continuous struggle of 87 years with no victory in sight. We believe that equality should be a given, and that all Greens must work toward that end. We are committed to increasing participation of women in politics, government and leadership so they can change laws, make decisions, and create policy solutions that affect and will improve women's lives, and we are building our party so that Greens can be elected to office to do this. In July 2002 the National Women's Caucus of the Green Party of the United States was founded to carry out the Party's commitment to women.

We also support, and call on others to support, the many existing and ongoing efforts for women:

Social Equality

- a. We support the equal application of the Constitution of the United States of America to all citizens, and therefore call for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). We urge accelerated ratification by three or more of the remaining 15 states that are required to pass ERA into law and into the Constitution. We urge renewed efforts and campaigns to ratify the ERA. We support the Equal Rights Amendment reintroduced in the U.S. Congress, and support using the precedent of a three-state strategy for ratification.
- b. We call for equal representation of women in Congress instead of the current 17% in 2012.

- c. The Green Party calls for U.S. passage of CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, which was adopted in 1979 by the U.N. General Assembly and ratified by 173 countries. The U.S. is one of the very few countries, and the only industrialized nation, that have not ratified it.
- d. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission should actively investigate and prosecute sexual harassment complaints. Women who file complaints must not be persecuted and should be protected under federal and state law. We must enshrine in law the basic principle that women have the same rights as men, and promote gender equality and fairness in the work force to ensure that women receive equal pay for jobs of equal worth.
- e. We support the inclusion of an equal number of women and men in peace talks and negotiations, not only because these efforts directly affect their lives and those of their husbands, children and families, but also because when women are involved, the negotiations are more successful.

Reproductive Rights

Women's rights must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman's right as a full participant in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination or interference in the intensely personal choice about whether to have a child.

Women's right to control their bodies is non-negotiable. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available. The "morning-after" pill must be affordable and easily accessible without a prescription, together with a government-sponsored public relations campaign to educate women about this form of contraception. Clinics must be accessible and must offer advice on contraception and the means for contraception; consultation about abortion and the performance of abortions, and; abortion regardless of age or marital status.

We endorse women's right to use contraception and, when they choose, to have an abortion. This right cannot be limited to women's age or marital status. Contraception and abortion must be included in all health insurance policies in the U.S., and any state government must be able to legally offer these services free of charge to women at the poverty level. Public health agencies operating abroad should be allowed to offer family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that ask for those services. We oppose our government's habit of cutting family planning funds when those funds go to agencies in foreign countries that give out contraceptive devices, offer advice on abortion, and perform abortions.

We encourage women and men to prevent unwanted pregnancies. It is the inalienable right and duty of every woman to learn about her body and to be aware of the phases of her menstrual cycle, and it is the duty for every man to be aware of the functions and health of his and his partner's bodies. This information is necessary for self-determination, to make informed decisions, and to prevent unintended consequences. Unplanned conception takes control away from individuals and makes them subject to external controls. The "morning-after" pill and option of a safe and legal abortion need to remain available.

Economic Equality

Since, nationally, women earn only 77% of men's wages for equal work, despite outnumbering men in the workforce and despite the U.S. 1963 Equal Pay Act, we support intensified effort to see this unfair gap closed, including support for the Paycheck Fairness Act and similar legislation, and greater effort at enforcement.

Single mothers are the largest and most severely impoverished group in the United States, which explains why 22% of the children in our country live below the poverty line. Welfare reform has forced mothers to abandon their children while they travel to work at minimum wage jobs. With the extreme pay inequity, single mothers cannot afford child care, nurture their children, and move out of poverty.

The Green Party supports real reforms to end poverty and return dignity and opportunity to all mothers. We call for implementing innovative programs that work with the particular and special needs of motherhood. We also support other programs such as a universal

basic income (known also as a guaranteed income or Citizen Dividend, as described in True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness, IV. E.) that will provide for those who nurture the next generation – work that is of incalculable importance to our society.

Violence and Oppression

Language is often used as a weapon by those with power, and women have traditionally borne the brunt of inflicted injuries. Freedom of speech is vital to democracy. However, we believe that this freedom should not be used to perpetuate oppression and abuse.

Violence against women is increasing nationwide. We must address the root cause of all violence even as we specifically address violence to women. We support stronger legislation, programs and enforcement. We also call for new dialog and re-thinking that can lead to better language, ideas and solutions. We urge that the term "domestic violence" be replaced by the term "violence," because "domestic violence" is not perceived as real violence, which leads to it not being treated legally and practically for the violence that it is. We urge that the term "sex work" not be used in relation to prostitution. With the increasing conflation of trafficking (the violent and illegal trafficking in women and girls for forced sex) with prostitution, it is impossible to know which is which, and what violence the term "sex work" is masking. No source in existence knows which forms of prostitution comprise forced sex and which comprise free will or choice prostitution. Forced sex is rape, and it is a crime. An increasing number of experts think the percentage of choice prostitution is very small, leaving the larger number of women exposed to serious and often fatal violence. Much of what is commonly called prostitution is actually sex trafficking by definition. The Green Party calls for a safer world for women and girls.

The Green Party has zero tolerance for the illegal international trafficking in

humans. Of the millions of humans trafficked worldwide, the large majority are women and children who are bought and sold as slaves. They are kept captive and in debt-bondage that can never be paid off. Most are sold over and over again for forced sex prostitution. Forced sex is rape and a serious crime. Some are forced to labor in agriculture, sweat shops, hotels, restaurants, domestic service and other forms of servitude. According to Human Rights Watch, in all cases coercive tactics – including deception, fraud, intimidation, isolation, threat and use of physical force, or debt bondage – are used to control women. Estimates of human trafficking in the U.S. vary greatly from 18,000 to 50,000 to over 100,000 with a worldwide estimate of 12.5 million, mostly women and children.

The Green Party calls for new U.S. legislation relating to prostitution modeled on the Swedish law passed in 1999, now adopted by other countries and being considered by more, that has drastically reduced human trafficking and prostitution in Sweden. That law criminalizes the purchase of services from prostitutes, pimps and brothel keepers instead of criminalizing the prostitutes. The Green Party urges the U.S. to open dialogs and visit with Sweden as a step toward introducing legislation in the U.S. Congress to address the exploitation, violence and harm to women through prostitution.

The Green Party supports all efforts to eradicate this extreme abuse of human rights, including but not limited to enforcement of existing laws and passage of tough new ones, punishing traffickers, aiding victims, increasing public awareness, reforming immigration laws, supporting existing programs and creating new ones.

We support the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report as an important document to begin to combat this abuse. We support and urge enforcement of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (HR 3244) signed into law on October 28, 2000. This Act authorizes funding for the prevention of trade in human beings and for protecting victims. It gives the State Department a historic opportunity to create an office with the exclusive responsibility of ending traffic in humans and protecting the victims of this worldwide trade. We urge committed political support to achieve the cooperation of all different levels of government.

The Green Party urges a more thorough dialog and understanding of violence against women and girls, including from prostitution and trafficking, that causes health and injury damage that seriously degrades their lives, even to death or premature death including from HIV, syphilis and many other diseases, as well as causing severe economic hardships. We call for solutions to this enormous problem that can result in awareness and the introduction of legislation in the U.S. Congress to address it.

2. Reparations for United States Afrodescendants (i.e., Black Americans, African Americans)

The development of the United States has been marked by conflict over questions of race. Our nation was formed only after Native Americans were displaced. The institution of slavery had as its underpinnings the belief in white supremacy, which we as Greens condemn. In slavery's aftermath, people of color have borne the brunt of violence and discrimination. The Green Party unequivocally condemns these evils, which continue to be a social problem of paramount significance.

- a. The community of people of African ancestry whose family members were held in chattel slavery in what is now the United States of America have legitimate claims to reparations including monetary compensation for centuries of human rights violations, including the Transatlantic slave trade now recognized by the United Nations as a "crime against humanity." As our Nation has done in the past with respect to the Choctaw, the Lakota, the Lambuth, and more recently for Japanese Americans and the European Jewish community, reparations are now due to address the debt still owed to descendants of enslaved Africans.
- b. We commit to full and complete 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 recognize that reparations are a debt (not charity) that

is owed by our own and other nations and by the corporate institutions chartered under our laws to a collective of people. We believe that the leadership on the question of what our nation owes to this process of right ought to come from the African American community, whose right to self-determination and autonomy to chart the path to healing we fully recognize.

- c. 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, health care 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.
- d. While consensus is still evolving on what would constitute full and complete reparations, we support the following initial steps:
 - o We support the creation of a claim of action and a right to recover inherited wealth and other profits accumulated from the slave trade for the benefit of a reparations trust fund.
 - o We will initiate the repeal of the slave clauses that survive today in the U.S. Constitution.
 - o We will work to restore lands stolen through a variety of tactics including: violence, terrorism and the discriminatory access to operating capital that together has robbed black farmers and the broader community of their lands.
 - o We support the release of all political prisoners held by the USA. It is time that the political frame-ups, the prosecutorial misconduct and the racist application of police power that pass for justice in our country be buried and those victimized by these abuses of state power be given their lives back.

- o We will support existing Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as well as new and existing Education and Development Funds.
- e. We support efforts to overcome the effects of over 200 years of racial discrimination.
- f. We call for an end to official support for any remaining symbols of slavery and specifically call for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from all government buildings.
- g. We condemn the practice of racial profiling by law enforcement agencies, which are guilty of stopping motorists, harassing individuals, or using unwarranted violence against suspects with no other justification than race or ethnic background.
- h. We favor strong measures to combat official racism in the forms of police brutality directed against people of color.
- i. We support effective enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, including language access to voting.
- j. We oppose discriminatory English-only pressure groups. We call for a national language policy that would encourage all citizens to be fluent in at least two languages. *[See section K. Immigration / Emigration in this chapter]*
- k. We strongly support the vigorous enforcement of civil-rights laws, the aggressive prosecution of hate crimes, and the strengthening of legal services for the poor.

3. Indigenous Peoples

We have great respect for Native American cultures, especially their deference for community and the Earth.

- a. We recognize both the sovereignty of Native American tribal governments and the Federal Government's trust obligation to Native

American people. Native American nations are just that — nations — and should be treated in like fashion, with the special circumstance that they are located within the United States.

- b. The federal government is obligated to deal in good faith with Native Americans; honor its treaty obligations; adequately fund programs for the betterment of tribal governments and their people; affirm the religious rights of Native Americans in ceremonies (American Indian Religious Freedom Act); provide funds for innovative economic development initiatives, education and public health programs; and respect land, water and mineral rights within the borders of reservations and traditional lands.
- c. We support efforts to broadly reform the Bureau of Indian Affairs to make this vast agency more responsible and more responsive to tribal governments.
- d. We support the just settlement of the claims of the thousands of Native American uranium miners who have suffered and died from radiation exposure. We condemn the stance of secrecy taken by the Atomic Energy Commission during this era and its subsequent claim of government immunity, taken knowingly and immorally at the expense of Native people. We support the complete clean-up of those mines and tailing piles, which are a profoundly destructive legacy of the Cold War.
- e. Native American land and treaty rights often stand as the front line against government and multinational corporate attempts to plunder energy, mineral, timber, fish, and game resources; pollute water, air, and land in the service of the military; expand economically; and consume natural resources. We support legal, political, and grassroots efforts by, and on behalf of, Native Americans to protect their traditions, rights, livelihoods, and sacred spaces.
- f. The Green Party supports the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, their ways of life, and all other rights of free peoples. We support the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN

General Assembly on September 13, 2007, and call for its provisions to be actively supported by our own government and by governments worldwide.

4. Justice for Native Hawaiians: Kanaka Maoli

Since illegal annexation in 1898, the federal and state governments have cheated and neglected the native Hawaiian people. In 1993, the U.S. Congress passed, and President Clinton signed into law, the "Apology Bill" (U.S. Public Law 103-150). This admission of crime states in part, "the native Hawaiians have never lost their inherent sovereignty nor their national home base."

The Green Party demands justice for Kanaka Maoli. We support the following:

- a. Protecting sacred and culturally significant sites.
- b. Efforts to nurture native Hawaiian culture.
- c. Kanaka maoli leadership and guardianship in protecting gathering rights, and lobbying the legislature to safeguard these rights without interference.
- d. Return of, or fair compensation for, ceded lands.
- e. Immediate distribution of Hawaiian Homelands, with government funds allocated for the necessary infrastructure.
- f. Prohibition of future sale or diminishments of the Ceded Land Trust.
- g. A call for open dialogue among all residents of Hawai'i on the sovereignty option of full independence.
- h. Hawaiian sovereignty in a form that is fair to both native Hawaiians and other residents of Hawai'i.
- i. We acknowledge and actively endorse the inherent and absolute right of

indigenous nations to self-determination, and thereby call upon the U.S. government to reverse its opposition to enactment of the proposed United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in its entirety.

5. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

In keeping with the Green Key Values of diversity, social justice and feminism, we support full legal and political equality for all persons regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity, characteristics, and expression.

1. The Green Party affirms the rights of all individuals to freely choose intimate partners, regardless of their sex, gender, or gender identity.
2. The Green Party recognizes the full civil rights of sexual and gender minorities. The existing civil rights act prohibits discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, and disability. We will work to add sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression to the existing civil rights act.
3. The Green Party will be inclusive of language in local, state and federal anti-discrimination law that ensures the rights of intersex individuals and prohibits discrimination based on gender identity, characteristics, and expression as well as on sex, gender, or sexual orientation. We are opposed to non-consenting intersex genital surgery.
4. The Green Party affirms the right of all persons to self-determination with regard to gender identity and sex. We affirm the right of choosing non-binary and gender fluid identification. We therefore support the right of individuals to be free from coercion and involuntary assignment of gender or sex.
5. We will pursue legislation where offenders must pay compensation to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA) people who have suffered violence and injustice.

6. The Green Party will end all Federal military aid to national governments whose laws result in the death, other harm, or imprisonment of its citizens and residents who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTQIA).
7. The Green Party will enact a policy that the U. S. Government recognize all same sex marriages or legal equivalents such as civil unions, in processing visitor and immigration visas.
8. The Green Party would end security surveillance and covert infiltration of organizations that promote rights for sexual and gender minorities.

6. Rights of the Disabled

We support the full enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act to enable all people with disabilities to achieve independence and function at the highest possible level. Government should work to ensure that children with disabilities are provided with the same educational opportunities as those without disabilities.

The physically and mentally challenged are people who are differently abled from the majority, but who are nevertheless able to live independently. The mentally ill are people with serious mental problems who often need social support networks. Physically and mentally challenged people have the right to live independently in their communities. The mentally ill also have the right to live independently, circumscribed only by the limitations of their illness. These people are their own best advocates in securing their rights and for living in the social and economic mainstream.

Current Medicaid policy forces many challenged people to live in costly state-funded institutions. Excluding these people from society alienates them; excluding them from the work force denies them the chance to use their potentials. The diminishing funds available to provide care for the growing number of the mentally ill often result in their homelessness, vagrancy and dependence on short-term crisis facilities. Lack of funding also increases the necessity of placing them in long-term, locked facilities. The Green Party urges

the government to:

- a. Increase rehabilitation funding so that persons with disabilities can pursue education and training to reach their highest potential. The differently abled should participate fully in the allocation decisions of state rehabilitation departments' funds.
- b. Aggressively implement the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- c. The Green Party supports the ratification of the United Nations Convention on Rights for Persons with Disabilities as well as the Optional Protocol.
- d. Fund in-home support services to allow the differently abled to hire personal care attendants while remaining at home.
- e. Allocate adequate funding to support community-based programs that provide out-patient medical services, case management services and counseling programs. We should provide a residential setting within the community for those who do not need institutional care but who are unable to live independently.
- f. Make it easier for the chronically mentally ill to apply for and receive Supplemental Security Income.
- g. Mainstream the differently abled. Increase teacher training in regard to the needs of differently abled students.
- h. Discourage stereotyping of the mentally and physically challenged by the entertainment industry and the media.
- i. Fund programs to increase public sensitivity to the needs of the mentally ill and differently abled.

7. Religious Freedom and Secular Equality

The United States Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of religion. We affirm the right of each individual to the exercise of conscience and religion, while maintaining the constitutionally mandated separation of government and religion. We believe that federal, state, and local governments must remain neutral regarding religion.

We call for:

- a. Ending discriminatory federal, state, and local laws against particular religious beliefs, and non-belief. The U.S. Constitution states that there shall be no religious test for public office. This requirement should apply to oaths (or affirmations) for holding public office at any level, employment at all government levels, oaths for witnesses in courts, oaths for jury membership, and the oath for citizenship.
- b. Prosecution of hate crimes based on religious affiliation or practice.
- c. Elimination of displays of religious symbols, monuments, or statements on government buildings, property, websites, money, or documents.
- d. Restoration of the Pledge of Allegiance to its pre-1954 version, eliminating the politically motivated addition of "under God."
- e. Ending faith-based initiatives and charitable choice programs, whereby public funds are used to support religious organizations that do not adhere to specified guidelines and standards, including anti-discrimination laws.
- f. Ending school vouchers whereby public money pays for students in religious schools.
- g. Ending governmental use of the doctrines of specific religions to define the nature of family, marriage, and the type and character of personal relationships between consenting adults.
- h. Ending religiously based curricula in government-funded public schools.

- i. Ending the use of religion as a justification to deny children necessary medical care or subject them to physical and emotional abuse.
- j. Ending the use of religion by government to define the role and rights of women in our society.
- k. Revocation of the Congressional charter of the Boy Scouts of America. Any private organization that practices bigotry against certain religious beliefs and classes of people should not have a Congressional endorsement or access to public property and funds.

8. Youth Rights

All human beings have the right to a life that will let them achieve their full potential. Young people are one of the least protected classes of human beings, yet they represent our future. We must ensure they have an upbringing that allows them to take their place as functioning, productive, and self-actualized members of their community.

- a. Youth are not the property of their parents or guardians, but are under their care and guidance.
- b. Youth have the right to survive by being provided adequate food, shelter and comprehensive health care, including prenatal care for mothers.
- c. Youth have the right to be protected from abuse, harmful drugs, violence, environmental hazards, neglect, and exploitation.
- d. Youth have the right to develop in a safe and nurturing early environment provided by affordable childcare and pre-school preparation.
- e. Youth have the right to an education that is stimulating, relevant, engaging, and that fosters their natural desire to learn.

- f. Young people's creative potential should be encouraged to the greatest extent possible.
- g. Young people should have input into the direction and pace of their own education, including input into the operation of their educational institutions.
- h. Young people should be provided with education regarding their own and others' sexuality at the earliest appropriate time.
- i. Young people should be provided the opportunity to express themselves in their own media, including television, radio, films and the Internet. Young people should also be given skills in analyzing commercial media.
- j. Young people should be kept free from coercive advertising at their educational institutions.

9. GI and Veterans' Rights

Support for men and women in the armed forces must go far beyond the rhetoric used to discredit the peace movement in the U.S. today. We believe that the ill-advised and illegal actions of the U.S. administration have unnecessarily put our troops in harm's way. We further believe that the dangerous burden of fighting the unnecessary war in Iraq, and the wars that may follow, due to the administration's overly narrow and militaristic response to terrorism is disproportionately borne by families of lesser means. Those who are required to carry out militaristic policies, often with great hardship to themselves, their families, and even the risk of their lives, deserve our respect and our commitment to adequate compensation and benefits.

Our first priority in foreign policy considerations is to creating a future without war. We are committed that future generations not face the separations and sacrifices of war.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Increase the current pay levels, including monthly combat pay, imminent danger pay and family separation allowances for those risking their lives in combat zones.
- b. Provide better care for the wounded, sick and injured soldiers. Restore full funding for veterans' health programs. Ensure that the Pentagon takes all steps necessary to fully diagnose and treat the physical and mental health conditions resulting from service in combat zones, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Support increased funding for additional clinics to provide services which now are too often delayed or denied throughout the Veterans Affairs system because of over crowding and budget constraints.
- c. Ensure that all pre-deployment physicals are completed within the standard allotted time period, and that medical follow-ups are routinely given to all soldiers.
- d. Honor all laws concerning time limits on deployments.
- e. Ensure a smooth transition from active military service to civilian life by providing counseling, housing, emergency management, job protection and other support systems.
- f. Many of those U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen who served during U.S. Wars in the past two decades have been exposed to nuclear, chemical and possibly biological warfare agents. We insist that the Veterans Administration not ignore the suffering they have experienced since coming home from the war. The Congress should fund and the VA should implement a comprehensive program to survey Vets and the impacts of Gulf War Syndrome on them and their families and to provide the best possible medical treatment available to minimize the suffering of these men and women and their families.
- g. Veterans of the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are being unfairly discharged from the service with PTSD and other injuries caused by

stress, trauma and head injuries, under trumped-up behavioral charges, as a means of military budget cost-cutting. As Greens we insist that all U.S. combatants are entitled to medical and psychiatric health care by the VA, after serving any time in a combat zones. Service members serving in combat zones are subjected to assorted variations of permanent physical and mental damage and are entitled to treatment by the Veterans Administration. This nation has a moral obligation to provide health care services and disability entitlements to its veterans. We support funding for additional clinics to provide services which now are too often delayed or denied because of over-crowding and budget constraints throughout the VA system.

- h. Provide recognized, independent veteran organizations with access to military personnel to ensure they are being informed of their rights, including those who are hospitalized due to service related injuries or illnesses.
- i. Establish a panel of independent medical doctors to examine and oversee the military policies regarding forced vaccinations and shots, especially with experimental drugs. Insist that the military halt the practice of testing experimental medicines and inoculations on service members without their consent.
- j. Enact a new GI Bill, similar to the one that began after World War II and ended in 1981, to provide tuition grants for four years of college or other educational opportunities, low-interest loans for housing or business start-ups, and free medical care for military personnel and their families for ten years following separation from the armed forces.
- k. Support a transparent and democratic conscientious objection process free of harassment, imprisonment, or deployment to war zones for conscientious objectors. Defend the right of individuals in the military service to modify or completely separate from military involvement because of conscientious objection.

10. Consumer Protection

The Green Party supports strong consumer protections against fraud, dangerous products, usury, corporate greed and rip-offs.

We believe that prevention and justice are at the heart of consumer protection. Millions of lives will be saved or lost depending on the strength of our consumer protection laws. We aim to stop corporations and others from defrauding consumers or endangering them with defective products or negligence. We stand with consumers, who have been injured or defrauded by corporations and others, and support their efforts to redress the wrongs done to them. We stand with whistleblowers, who are often the public's best protection against corporate crime, fraud and waste.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Strengthen product safety standards and enforcement for a variety of products, including food, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals and airplanes.
- b. Restore state health, safety, and consumer protection laws by striking federal preemptions that weaken state law.
- c. Preserve and expand product labeling requirements to ensure that consumers are informed about the origin, ingredients and ecological life cycle of all products, including animal testing and the product's organic, recycled and genetically-engineered content. Include information about the nutritional value and the vegetarian or vegan status of food products.
- d. Prohibit corporations from concealing information about public health, labor conditions or environmental safety via protective orders or confidential settlements.
- e. Expand class action rights against manufacturers of unsafe products and practices, and strengthen the civil justice system and supply the resources necessary to bring to justice to those corporations that injure innocent consumers.

- f. Protect whistle blowers against demotion, job loss, and other forms of retaliation.
- g. Oppose "tort reform" that undermines consumers' ability to seek redress, and "medical malpractice reform" that relieves negligent doctors of responsibility for injuring or killing their patients.
- h. Grant consumers the right to limit collection and secondary use of personal information by any commercial entity.
- i. Prohibit lenders and credit card companies from charging more than 12% annual interest, indexed for inflation, along with broad protections against unwarranted fees and other abusive terms.
- j. Prohibit the widespread practice of price gouging against women and the poor.
- k. Repeal the misnamed Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005 in order to restore Chapter 7 bankruptcy as a viable final safety net for consumers caught by health crises, unaffordable mortgages, credit card debts and student loans.
- l. Ban the use of mandatory arbitration clauses in consumer contracts, which companies use to shunt consumers into anti-consumer and unfair dispute resolution processes.
- m. Establish new independent government consumer advocacy agencies to protect the interests of consumers, and restore the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs.
- n. Support policies to encourage citizens, taxpayers, ratepayers and consumers to form Citizens Utility Boards to advocate for the public interest.

11. Adoptee Rights

Due to current laws millions of adults that were adopted as children are now being denied access to vital records regarding their births. This is a basic human right that the Green Party should be committed to help in abolishing the secrets and lies that surround many adoptions around the world by creating necessary transparency between adoptees, their mothers and adoptive parents.

Reform items include the following:

- a. 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.
- b. 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 of storing these vital records.
- c. Full reparations for historical injustices in adoption.

B. Environmental Justice

The Green Party supports a holistic approach to justice, recognizing that environmental justice, social justice and economic justice depend on and support each other. We believe that no one — including people of color and the poor — should be poisoned nor subjected to harmful levels of toxic chemicals and that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the pollution from industrial, governmental and commercial sources or policies. Across the United States, the poor and people of color do suffer disproportionately from environmental hazards in the workplace, at home, and in their communities. Inadequate environmental laws, lax enforcement, and

weak penalties for environmental violations undermine environmental integrity, public health and civil rights.

Environmental justice is the crossroads of environmental activism and the civil rights movement. It is founded on two fundamental beliefs: that all people have the right to live, work, learn, and play in safe and healthful environments; and that people have the right to influence decisions that affect environmental quality in their communities.

We believe that government must ensure the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. To accomplish this, we unconditionally support implementation of the principle of environmental justice in our practices, policies and laws across the nation.

We recommend the following actions:

1. Make "pollution prevention" the preferred strategy for dealing with environmental justice issues, through eliminating environmental threats before they occur and considering cumulative environmental impacts when evaluating risk.
2. Uphold the precautionary principle, requiring polluters to bear the burden of proof in demonstrating the safety of their practices. Expand the application of the precautionary principle from chemicals and health to land use, waste, energy, food policy and local economic development.
3. Expand the public trust doctrine, which holds that government's role is to protect the commons, to include the domains of public health and protection of the natural environment.
4. Promote programs, policies, and legislation that build the capacity to identify disproportionate or discriminatory siting of polluting or toxic facilities. Assure non-discriminatory compliance with all environmental, health and safety laws to guarantee equal protection.

5. Facilitate procedural justice, ensuring the public's right to know. Ensure rules and regulations are transparent to help communities employ their rights and participate in decision-making. Provide information in languages appropriate to the affected communities.
6. Enforce corrective justice, ensuring the rights of communities and local agencies to seek judicial redress. Communities and local agencies must not be required to show or prove "intent to discriminate" to achieve redress for problems of disproportionate and/or racist environmental impacts.
7. Target precautionary and corrective justice actions and resources in communities with the highest concentrations of environmental hazards and in communities lacking socioeconomic resources.
8. Support, enforce and strengthen the National Environmental Policy Act.

C. Economic Justice / Social Safety Net

The passage of the 1996 Welfare Act by Congress and its signing by the President confronts us with hard choices. Democrats and Republicans seem to be saying the country cannot afford to care for children and poor mothers. In ending over fifty years of federal policy guaranteeing cash assistance for poor children, Congress has set in motion a radical experiment that will have a profound impact on the lives of the weakest members of our society. How will state, city and county governments, local communities, businesses and religious institutions — all of us — respond?

We have a special responsibility to the health and wellbeing of the young. Yet we see the federal safety net being removed and replaced with limited and potentially harsh state welfare programs. How will social services be adequately provided if local resources are already stretched thin?

We believe our community priorities must first protect the young and helpless.

Yet how will state legislatures and agencies, under pressure from more powerful interests, react? We believe local decision-making is important, but we realize, as we learned during the civil rights era, that strict federal standards must guide state actions in providing basic protections. As the richest nation in history, we should not condemn millions of children to a life of poverty, while corporate welfare is increased to historic highs.

The Green Party opposes the privatization of Social Security. It is critical that the public protections of Social Security are not privatized and subjected to increased risk. The bottom 20% of American senior citizens get roughly 80% of their income from Social Security, and without Social Security, nearly 70% of black elderly and 60% of Latino elderly households would be in poverty.

D. Welfare: A Commitment to Ending Poverty

An unjust society is an unsustainable society. When communities are stressed by poverty, violence and despair, our ability to meet the challenges of the post industrial age are critically impaired. A holistic, future-focused perspective on how we distribute resources in this country would consider the effects of such distribution not just on our present needs, but on the seventh generation to come.

It is time for a radical shift in our attitude toward support for families, children, the poor and the disabled. Such support must not be given grudgingly; it is the right of those presently in need and an investment in our future. We must take an uncompromising position that the care and nurture of children, elders and the disabled are essential to a healthy, peaceful, and sustainable society. We should recognize that the work of their caregivers is of social and economic value, and reward it accordingly. Ensuring that children and their caregivers have access to an adequate, secure standard of living should form the cornerstone of our economic priorities. Only then can we hope to build our future on a foundation of healthy, educated children who are raised in an atmosphere of love and security.

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

- b. Work performed outside the monetary system has inherent social and economic value, and is essential to a healthy, sustainable economy and peaceful communities. Such work includes: child and elder care; homemaking; voluntary community service; continuing education; participating in government; and the arts.
- c. We call for restoration of a federally funded entitlement program to support children, families, the unemployed, elderly and disabled, with no time limit on benefits.
- d. This program should be funded through the existing welfare budget, reductions in military spending and corporate subsidies, and a fair, progressive income tax.
- e. We call for 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.
- f. We advocate reinvesting a significant portion of the military budget into family support, living-wage job development, and work training programs. Publicly funded work training and education programs should have a goal of increasing employment options at finding living-wage jobs.
- g. We support public funding for the development of living-wage jobs in community and environmental service. For example, environmental clean-up, recycling, sustainable agriculture and food production, sustainable forest management, repair and maintenance of public facilities, neighborhood-based public safety, aides in schools, libraries and childcare centers, and construction and renovation of energy-efficient housing. We oppose enterprise zone giveaways, which benefit corporations more than inner-city communities.
- h. The accumulation of individual wealth in the U.S. has reached grossly unbalanced proportions. It is clear that we cannot rely on the rich to

regulate their profit-making excesses for the good of society through "trickle-down economics." We must take aggressive steps to restore a fair distribution of income. We support tax incentives for businesses that apply fair employee wage distribution standards, and income tax policies that restrict the accumulation of excessive individual wealth.

- i. Forcing welfare recipients to accept jobs that pay wages below a living wage drives wages down and exploits workers for private profit at public expense. We reject workfare as being a form of indentured servitude.
- j. Corporations receiving public subsidies must provide jobs that pay a living wage, observe basic workers' rights, and agree to affirmative action policies.

E. Education and the Arts

1. Education

The Green Party supports equal access to high-quality education, and sharp increases in financial aid for college students.

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

Today, America's public school system faces a different set of challenges. For the first time in this country's history, students of color represent the majority of the PK-12 public education student body. Additionally, now more than half of all school children are classified as "low income." Even more critical is the fact that now nearly 35 percent of all public school students have some specific learning disability and are receiving special education services. Given these

factors, in order for America's schools to truly become effective in teaching our students to think critically and to respond to life challenges, districts, schools and teachers must develop a new consciousness toward students that includes cultural competency, the understanding of the impact of poverty on school performance, asset-based engagement and how to create stable, nurturing school environments that will help students thrive and succeed.

Therefore, Greens work toward:

- a. Dismantling white supremacy in our schools, represented in curricula, discipline, teacher recruitment and more, by seeking to end the school-to-jailhouse track
- b. Free teachers from requirements to use exclusively Common Core Standards-aligned materials, which neglects the contributions and struggles of people of color. Teachers should be free to choose whichever materials are academically-challenging and culturally appropriate for their students.
- c. Strengthen cultural competency requirements for teachers. Provide robust professional development in cultural competency, and widen the scope of teacher preparation to include cultural competency training.
- d. End alternative teacher licensing initiatives, such as Teach for America, which recruit primarily white teachers and inject them into urban classrooms with as little as five weeks' training and only a two-year commitment, creating great destabilization in school communities that need consistent leadership and community connections.
- e. Incentivize "grow your own teacher" programs in oppressed communities with targeted recruitment during high school, federal grants and loan forgiveness and mentoring.
- f. Invest more resources into recruiting fully bilingual school support staff, such as front-office and family resource personnel and counselors.

- g. Eliminate police officers from our schools. Ensure school security personnel are trained for, and held accountable to, conflict resolution techniques and anti-bias training. Security personnel should also demonstrate cultural competency and refrain from enforcing white supremacist oppressive tactics.
- h. Recognize the impact of poverty on student achievement, which no amount of sanctions, standards, turnarounds, teacher targeting or privatization will fix. Implement strategies such as wraparound services and more to support students in poverty.
- i. Eradicate the vestiges of structural racism represented through police violence, incarceration, school suspension and dropout rates, inequitable school funding and use of schemes like "student-based budgeting," behavior policies based on "no excuses," "character education" and "grit," and school closures.

The Green Party is strongly opposed to the dissolution of public schools and the privatization of education. We believe that the best educational experience is guaranteed by the democratic empowerment of organized students, their parents and communities along with organized teachers. We should challenge students with great works of literature, economics, philosophy, history, music, and the arts as regular academic subjects.

We must stop disinvestment in education and instead put it at the top of our social and economic agenda. Effective schools have sufficient resources. Too many of our teachers are overworked, underpaid, and starved of key materials.

Greens believe in education, not indoctrination. We do not think that schools should turn our children into servile students, employees, consumers or citizens. We believe it is very important to teach our children how to ask good questions.

We also call attention to the results of a quarter century of corporate funding from the likes of the Bradley and Wal-Mart Family Foundations and a decade of No Child Left Behind and its repackaged new offspring, the Every Student

Succeeds Act (ESSA)—a vast, well-endowed and lucrative sector which seeks to dismantle, privatize, or militarize public education and destroy teachers unions. Regimes of high-stakes standardized testing and the wholesale diversion of resources away from public schools are provoking crises for which the bipartisan corporate consensus recommends school closings, dissolution of entire school districts and replacement by unaccountable, profit-based charter schools. The Green Party is unalterably opposed to the dissolution of public schools and the privatization of education.

Therefore, the Green Party advocates:

- a. That with the failure of NCLB's testing mandate, recognize and uphold parents' right to opt their children out of any standardized test, instead of ESSA's weak permission of allowing states to pass such statutes. End the official bullying and threats from school and district officials when parents opt out.
- b. End all standardized testing and instead redirect the millions of funds allocated toward prep, materials, support, etc. to creating expanded access to music, arts, sciences and languages as mandatory, academic subjects.
- c. End all federal competitive grants like Race to the Top (RTTT) and instead equitably fund schools based on a priority of socioeconomic level.
- d. ESSA's passing the buck of "test and punish" to the states puts more authority in the hands of people with even less understanding of pedagogy and child development than even the US Department of Education. Students of color, English learners and students with disabilities used to be able to count on federal oversight of their basic rights in school.
- e. End ESSA's promotion of charter-friendly, unproven alternative teaching licensing and "credential mills" like Relay Graduate School of Education and others, that circumvent public oversight.

The Green Party views learning as a lifelong and life-affirming process to which

all people should have access. We cannot state more forcefully our belief that in learning, and openness to learning, we find the foundation of our Platform.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Eliminate gross inequalities in school funding. Federal policy on education should act principally to provide equal access to a quality education.
- b. Provide free college tuition to all qualified students at public universities and vocational schools. Abolish all student and parent loans taken out to finance post-secondary and vocational education.
- c. Oppose the administration of public schools by private, for-profit entities.
- d. Increase funding for after-school and daycare programs.
- e. Promote a diverse set of educational opportunities, including multilingual education, continuing education, job retraining, distance learning, mentoring and apprenticeship/vocational programs. Provide resources for career counseling. programs.
- f. Build education programs based on autochthonous skills, crafts, art, music, permaculture, and history. Also present children of colonial heritage viable and sustainable ways of life of indigenous peoples worldwide.
- g. For students with disabilities, provide a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment (as inclusive as possible). Provide curriculum designed for specific disabilities, as well as inclusive training for ALL teachers. Improve transition programs for students with disabilities from ages 18-21.
- h. Give K-12 classroom teachers professional status and salaries commensurate with advanced education, training and responsibility.
- i. Teach non-violent conflict resolution and humane education at all levels of education. Implement and fully-fund restorative justice programs as an

alternative to suspension and police referral.

- j. Provide age-appropriate education on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and safer sex.
- k. Prohibit advertising to children in schools. Corporations should not be allowed to use the schools as vehicles for commercial advertising or corporate propaganda.
- l. Provide healthy school meals that are rich in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber, and offer plant-based vegetarian options. Support Farm-to-School programs that provide food from local family farms and educational opportunities. Develop culturally-sensitive menus and provide opportunities for parents to assist in meal preparation.
- m. Ban the sale of soda pop and junk food in schools. Junk food is defined as food or beverages that are relatively high in saturated or trans fat, added sugars or salt, and relatively low in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber.
- n. Oppose military and corporate control over the priorities and topics of university academic research.
- o. Expand opportunities for universal higher education and life-long learning.
- p. Include a vigorous and engrossing civics curriculum in later elementary and secondary schools, to teach students to be active citizens.
- q. Encourage parental responsibility by supporting parenting in culturally-sensitive ways and increasing opportunities for parents to be as involved as possible in their children's education. Values start with parents and schools should not seek to de-program students from those values.
- r. Expand arts education and physical education opportunities at school.

- s. Recognize the viable alternative of home-based education and support working-class parents who wish to offer it to their children.
- t. Oppose efforts to restrict the teaching of scientific information and the portrayal of religious belief as fact.
- u. Provide adequate academic and vocational education and training to prisoners.
- v. Decrease the student-teacher ratio in classrooms and increase the number of counselors, nurses, librarians and social workers.
- w. Make all public education sites gun-free to provide a safe learning environment
- x. Include self-defense skills in the physical education curriculum at elementary school level
- y. Provide researched-based drug, tobacco, and alcohol abuse prevention, as well as evidence-based information about the true effect of recreational or medicinal substances such as cannabis on the developing brain.
- z. Include curricula focusing on civil rights history, actions, and advances, and how current law can be used to achieve personal civil rights. Teach all students about white supremacy and intersectionality.
- aa. We urge that our nation amend its “binding declaration” with respect to the “Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict” to join the rest of the world in setting 18 as the absolute minimum age for military recruitment.
- ab. No person should be permitted to sign away eight years of their life to the armed forces, without full written disclosure of what is expected of them and what they can expect in return from the government. We demand that the practice of deceiving prospective service recruits about the truth of

their service contract be recognized as a fraudulent practice and sufficient grounds for revoking an enlistment contract. Current practices holding individuals legally to all the terms of their military service contract should also apply to the government.

- ac. We demand an end to the militarization of our schools. JROTC programs are an expensive drain on our limited educational resources and a diversion from their important mission to prepare our young to assume their role in a peaceful tomorrow. ASVAB testing is being used to mine public school student bodies for data to support military recruiting. Forbid military access to student records. The Pentagon's Recruitment Command is misdirecting public tax dollars on manipulative campaigns that prey on our young. We insist that local education authorities stand up to these destructive practices.

2. The Arts

Freedom of artistic expression is a fundamental right and a key element in empowering communities, and in moving us toward sustainability and respect for diversity. Artists can create in ways that foster healthy, non-alienating relationships between people and their daily environments, communities, and the Earth. This can include both artists whose themes advocate compassion, nurturance, or cooperation; and artists whose creations unmask the often-obscure connections between various forms of violence, domination, and oppression, or effectively criticize aspects of the very community that supports their artistic activity. The arts can only perform their social function if they are completely free from outside control.

The Green Party supports:

- a. Alternative, community-based systems treating neither the artwork nor the artist as a commodity.
- b. Eliminating all laws that seek to restrict or censor artistic expression, including the withholding of government funds for political or moral content.

- c. Increased funding for the arts appropriate to their essential social role at local, state and federal levels of government.
- d. Community-funded programs employing local artists to enrich their communities through public art programs, including public performances, exhibitions, murals on public buildings, design or re-design of parks and public areas, storytelling and poetry reading, and publication.
- e. The establishment of non-profit public forums for local artists to display their talents and creations. Research, public dialogue, and trial experiments to develop alternative systems for the valuation and exchange of artworks and for the financial support of artists. Some examples include community subscriber support groups, artwork rental busts, cooperative support systems among artists, legal or financial incentives to donate to the arts or to donate artworks to public museums.
- f. Responsible choices of non-toxic, renewable, or recyclable materials. Funding sources not connected with social injustice or environmental destruction.
- g. Education programs in the community that will energize the creativity of every community member from the youngest to the oldest, including neglected groups such as teenagers, senior citizens, prisoners, immigrants, and drug addicts. These programs would provide materials and access to interested, qualified arts educators for every member of the community who demonstrates an interest.
- h. Funding and staffing to incorporate arts education into every school curriculum. We encourage local artists and the community to contribute time, experience, and resources to these efforts.

- i. Diversity in arts education in the schools including age-specific hands-on activities and appreciative theoretical approaches, exposure to the arts of various cultures and stylistic traditions, and experiences with a variety of media, techniques and contents.
- j. The integration of the arts and artistic teaching methods into other areas of the curriculum to promote a holistic perspective.

F. Health Care

The Green Party supports single-payer universal health care and preventive care for all. We believe that health care is a right, not a privilege.

Our current health care system lets tens of thousands of people die each year by excluding them from adequate care, while its exorbitant costs are crippling our economy. The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world without a national health care system.

Under a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health care system, the administrative waste of private insurance corporations would be redirected to patient care. If the United States were to shift to a system of universal coverage and a single payer plan, as in Canada and many European countries, the savings in administrative costs would be more than enough to offset the cost of additional care. Expenses for businesses currently providing coverage would be reduced, while state and local governments would pay less because they would receive reimbursement for services provided to the previously uninsured, and because public programs would cease to be the "dumping ground" for high-risk patients and those rejected by health maintenance organizations (HMOs) when they become disabled and unemployed. In addition, people would gain the peace of mind in knowing that they have health care they need. No longer would people have to worry about the prospect of financial ruin if they become seriously ill, are laid off their jobs, or are injured in an accident.

The Green Party supports a wide range of health care services, including conventional medicine, as well as the teaching, funding and practice of complementary, integrative and licensed alternative health care approaches.

Greens recognize that our own health is also intimately tied to the health of our communities and environment. To improve our own health, we must improve the quality of our air, water and food and the health of our workplaces, homes and schools.

The Green Party unequivocally supports a woman's right to reproductive choice, no matter her marital status or age, and that contraception and safe, legal abortion procedures be available on demand and be included in all health insurance coverage in the U.S., as well as free of charge in any state where a woman's income falls below the poverty level. *[See section A.1. Women's Rights in this chapter]*

We recommend the following actions:

1. Single-Payer Health Care

Enact a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health plan that will provide the following with no increase in cost:

- a. A publicly funded health care insurance program, administered at the state and local levels, with comprehensive lifetime benefits, including dental, vision, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, medication coverage, and hospice and long-term care;
- b. Participation of all licensed and/or certified health providers, subject to standards of practice in their field, with the freedom of patients to choose the type of health care provider from a wide range of health care choices, and with decision-making in the hands of patients and their health providers, not insurance companies;
- c. Portability of coverage regardless of geographical location or

employment;

- d. Cost controls via streamlined administration, national fee schedules, bulk purchases of drugs and medical equipment, coordination of capital expenditures and publicly negotiated prices of medications;
- e. Primary and preventive care as priorities, including wellness education about diet, nutrition and exercise; holistic health; and medical marijuana.
- f. More comprehensive services for those who have special needs, including the mentally ill, the differently abled and those who are terminally ill;
- g. A mental health care system that safeguards human dignity, respects individual autonomy, and protects informed consent;
- h. Greatly reduced paperwork for both patients and providers;
- i. Fair and full reimbursement to providers for their services;
- j. Hospitals that can afford safe and adequate staffing levels of registered nurses;
- k. Establishment of national, state, and local health policy boards consisting of health consumers and providers to oversee and evaluate the performance of the system, ensure access to care, and help determine research priorities; and
- l. Establishment of a National Health Trust Fund that would channel all current Federal payments for health care programs directly into the Fund, in addition to employees' health premium payments.

2. AIDS / HIV

The Green Party calls for comprehensive, humane, and competent care of all people with HIV/AIDS.

The AIDS epidemic has not had adequate public health management at all government levels. Drug corporations have a strong profit motive to encourage for medical management of those with HIV by using medication that keeps the virus from being detected in the blood. This means there are guaranteed sales of very expensive drugs. Rather than invest in research for a cure like they have done with Hepatitis C, the drug companies invest in drugs that manage a chronic illness. The Green Party believes that this failure to invest in research for a cure is because mainstream society has the belief that contracting HIV is self-inflicted by "sinful" or "illegal" behavior. The largest groups with HIV/AIDS in the USA are men who have sex with men, including gay, bisexual, and trans men, and men of color, particularly of African and Latinx descent. Persons who share needles are the next largest group of persons with HIV/AIDS in the USA. While HIV drug treatment regimens have saved lives, some people suffer from debilitating side effects where quality of life is poor. There is also the economic side effect due to the high cost of these life-saving medications.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Increased public education in transmission prevention which includes funding for the purchase and distribution of condoms, gloves, dams, and needles & syringes.
- b. Increased funding for age appropriate comprehensive sex education that includes use of barriers for prevention of fluid/blood transmission. We support students having easy access to condoms, gloves, and dams in schools.
- c. Increased funding for research focusing on a cure in addition to chronic disease management.
- d. Creation of a repository for the latest peer reviewed theories,

studies, and findings, and to facilitate sharing among research laboratories, schools and universities, medical centers, and public health facilities that would be accessible for common good rather than kept proprietary for profit.

- e. Funding for methods of peer education for sex workers and those who may share needles, and to supply them with condoms, dams, gloves, and needles & syringes.
- f. Educating incarcerated individuals in HIV transmission prevention and supplying them with condoms, dams, and gloves. Additionally, remove barriers to access of medicines for incarcerated individuals with HIV/AIDS, and Hepatitis C.
- g. Increased funding for educating the public about addiction and funding for treatment facilities for addicts, and for transitional housing to help with society re-entry.
- h. Education and funding for addiction harm reduction practices, including available needle exchange programs for those individuals with substance use problems who are not yet ready to enter treatment programs.
- i. Immediate increases in funding for programs that ensure all individuals with HIV/AIDS who want housing or treatment are able to obtain such promptly. No individuals with HIV should ever spend a single night on the streets or be turned away from treatment due to their economic status. We advocate for creating daily HIV medication distribution centers for individuals who are unable to manage the complex daily medication regimen without assistance.
- j. Increased funding for free, anonymous testing of people for the presence of HIV/AIDS. No mandated testing.

- k. Full funding to ensure broad access to Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) programs, which have been proven by researchers to minimize transmission of HIV and reduce public health costs by preventing the need for expensive, lifelong HIV treatment regimens. The Green Party calls for our governments to make every effort to negotiate fair and reasonable prices for associated drugs, rather than allowing manufacturers to extract excessive profits from these life-saving medications.
- l. Funding for outreach and treatment to address the particular circumstances and specific needs of the various communities affected by HIV/AIDS.
- m. More research into better methods of prevention of HIV infection. While we support condom use, better condoms are also required. We support more vaccine research as well as research on prevention methods such as microbicides. People must be provided the means and support to protect themselves from all sexually transmitted and blood & body fluid borne diseases.
- n. A repeal of all HIV criminalization laws and policies and release all prisoners imprisoned solely due to HIV status.
- o. Restore full federal health funding for persons living with HIV.

G. Labor

The right to organize unions, bargain freely and strike when necessary is being destroyed by employers and their representatives in government. Today, nearly one out of ten workers involved in union organizing drives is illegally fired by employers who wage a campaign of fear, threats, and slick propaganda to keep workers from exercising a genuinely free choice.

And as union membership falls, so do the wages of all working people, union

and non-union alike. We support efforts to overcome these legal handicaps, especially in the South and Southwest where the laws are most hostile. We also must dedicate ourselves to fighting for a complete overhaul of this country's labor laws.

1. The Green Party supports the irreducible right of working people, without hindrance, to form a union and to bargain collectively with their employer. This right was guaranteed under the National Labor Relations Act of 1935.
 1. We support the right of workers, without penalty, to inform other workers on the premises of a union being formed. This includes advertising and recruiting.
2. It is imperative that employees enjoy workplace democracy, which includes the following:
 - a. The right to elect representatives to sit equally with management on the Board of Directors.
 - b. The right to fair and democratic elections of their own union officers.
 - c. No permanent replacement of striking workers.
 - d. No forced overtime.
 - e. Flexible working schedules so employees can arrange their own time to deal with personal and family concerns.
 - f. All workers, temporary or permanent, must be paid a living wage. The federal minimum wage for all workers should be set to at least \$15 per hour, indexed to inflation.
 - g. All workers must have health care coverage, at least half paid by employer, until the passage of universal health care.
 - h. All workers must have unemployment insurance, workers'

compensation, and access to a jobs search program when they are unemployed. This security applies to farm workers as well.

- i. Minimum pensions for all workers, fully vested and portable, that do not reduce social security benefits.
 - j. Mediation as the first available solution to labor-management disputes, with an agreed-upon time limit.
 - k. New union members' right to submit a first contract to binding arbitration at the request of the union.
 - l. Labor's first right to buy out a company that is for sale or is going bankrupt, or being outsourced to another state or another country.
 - m. Requiring employers who purchase or merge with other companies to honor all existing collective bargaining agreements and contracts.
 - n. Labor's right to stock ownership and oversight of the investment of its own funds in the company where it works.
3. We support the enactment of living wage laws that apply to all workers. A major consequence of this law will be the lessening of the ever-widening gap between CEOs' income and workers' pay.
 4. Agricultural and other excluded workers must be covered by federal labor laws, except where existing state laws offer more protection.
 5. We encourage cooperative ownership and management of enterprises.

6. We support day-care service offered at every workplace when feasible, or reasonably near-by when not feasible at the workplace.
7. Management's ability to close its workplace and move to a lower-pay locale must be circumscribed to the degree that it protects the local workforce and their job security.
8. We support the establishment of a reduced-hour work week and at least one month of vacation per year for all workers.
9. The ever-widening gap between rich and poor is destructive of democracy and creates an uneven playing field for economic opportunity. Public welfare that depends on hand-outs from the corporate rich reduces democracy by that same amount. Every citizen must have the leverage necessary to become a productive member of the economy and the society in which we live.
10. All workers have a right to a safe and humane working environment. A lack of adequate enforcement of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) laws and/or insufficient standards put many workers at risk. We support the following safety policies:
 - a. Protect and enforce OSHA laws. We insist on adequate testing of equipment and funding of enforcement procedures.
 - b. Inform workers of workplace hazards. Employers have a responsibility to protect workers from those hazards.
 - c. Legislate full funding for worker safety programs at both the state and federal levels.

- d. Insist on agricultural practices that don't endanger farm workers. Put agricultural practices under the jurisdiction of OSHA.
11. We stand firmly opposed to privatization and contracting-out of public services. A government that works for us would provide critical goods and services that should not be run for profit.

H. Criminal Justice

OUR POSITION

Reduce the prison population, invest in rehabilitation, and end the failed war on drugs.

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 addiction crimes, 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.

The negative effects of imprisonment are far-reaching. Prisoners are isolated from their communities and often denied contact with the free world and the media. Access to educational and legal materials is in decline. Prison administrators wield total authority over their environments, diminishing procedural input from experts and censoring employee complaints.

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.

Greens oppose the increasingly widespread privatization of prisons. These

prisons treat people as their product and provide far worse service than government-run prisons. Profits in privately run prisons are derived from understaffing, which severely reduces the acceptable care of inmates. Greens believe that greater, not lesser public input, oversight and control of prisons is the answer.

Greens call for an end to the "war on drugs", legalization of drugs and for treating drug abuse as a health 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 criminals, while crowding our prisons with non-violent drug offenders and disproportionately criminalizing youth of color.

Greens also call attention to the fact that more than forty percent of those 2.3 million locked down come from America's black one-eighth.

The Green Party recognizes that our nation's ostensibly color-blind systems of law enforcement and crime control, from police practices to prosecutorial prerogatives, to mandatory sentencing and zero-tolerance have 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 ultimately reversed. The nearly universal, though largely unspoken nature of this policy makes piecemeal reforms not accompanied by public discussion of the larger policy ineffective outside the context of a broad social movement.

GREEN SOLUTIONS

1. Alternatives to Incarceration

- a. Encourage and support positive approaches to punishment that build hope, responsibility and a sense of belonging. Prisons should be the sentence 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.

- b. Treat substance abuse as a medical problem, not a criminal problem. Free all non-violent incarcerated prisoners of the drug war. Provide treatment to parolees and probationers who fail a drug test instead of re-incarceration.
- c. Release prisoners with diagnosed mental disorders to secure mental health treatment centers. Ensure psychological and medical care and rehabilitation services for mentally ill prisoners.
- d. Release prisoners who are too old and/or infirm to pose a threat to society to less expensive, community-based facilities.
- e. Make reduction of recidivism a primary goal of parole. Treat parole as a time of reintegration into the community, not as a continuation of sentence. Provide community reentry programs for inmates before their release. Provide access to education, addiction and psychological treatment, job training, work and housing upon their release. Provide counseling and other services to the members of a parolee's family, to help them with the changes caused by the parolee's return. Prevent unwarranted search without reasonable cause to parolees and their homes.
- f. Increase funding for rape and domestic violence prevention and education programs.
- g. Never house juvenile offenders with adults. House violent and non-violent juvenile offenders separately. Continue the education of juveniles while in custody. Substantially decrease the number of juvenile's assigned to each judge and caseworker to oversee each juvenile's placement and progress in the juvenile justice system.

2. Prison Conditions, Prisoner Treatment and Parolees

- a. Ensure prison conditions are humane and sanitary, including but are limited to heat, light, exercise, clothing, nutrition, libraries, possessions, and personal safety. Meet prisoners' dietary requirements. Ensure availability of psychological, drug, and medical treatment, including access to condoms and uninterrupted access to all prescribed medication. Minimize isolation of prisoners from staff and one another only as needed for safety. Make incarceration more community-based, including through increased visitor access by families. Establish and enforce prison policies that discourage racism, sexism, homophobia and rape.
- b. Ban private prisons.
- c. Implement a moratorium on prison construction. Redirect funds to alternatives to incarceration.
- d. Require that each state prison system install a rehabilitation administrator with equal authority as the highest authority.
- e. Ensure that all prisoners have the opportunity to obtain a General Education Diploma (i.e. high school equivalency diploma) and higher education. Education has proven to reduce recidivism by 10%.
- f. Ensure the First Amendment rights of prisoners, including the right to communicate with journalists, write letters, publish their own writings, and become legal experts on their own cases.
- g. Provide incarcerated individuals the right to vote by absentee ballot in the district of their domicile, and the right to vote during parole.
- h. Restore the right to hold public office to felons who have completed their prison sentence.

- i. Conduct racial and ethnic disparity impact studies for new and existing categories of offenses.

3. Criminal Justice Reform

- a. Abolish the death penalty.
- b. Repeal "three strikes" laws. Restore judicial discretion in sentencing. Abolish mandatory sentencing.
- c. Establish and fund programs to strengthen self-help and community action through neighborhood centers that provide legal aid, alternative dispute-resolution practices, mediated restitution, community team policing, and access to local crisis/assault care shelters.
- d. Establish elected or appointed independent civilian re-view boards with subpoena power to investigate complaints about prison guard and community police behavior. Sharply restrict police use of weapons and restraining techniques such as pepper spray, stun belts, tasers and choke holds.
- e. Prohibit property forfeiture and denial of due process for unconvicted suspects.
- f. Establish freedom on bail as a right of all defendants charged with non-violent crimes. Incorporate mental health and social services in bail agreements.
- g. Increase compensation for jurors and provide childcare for those serving jury duty.
- h. Protect victims' rights. Ensure the opportunity for victims to make victim-impact statements. Consider forms of restitution to victims.

- i. Thoughtful, carefully considered gun control such as is contained in the Brady Bill (1993). Eliminate the gun show loophole that permits sale of weapons without background checks. Extend background checks to all private sales of firearms.

4. End the War on Drugs

- a. End the "war on drugs." Redirect funds presently budgeted for the "war on drugs" toward expanded research, education, counseling and treatment.
- b. Amend the Controlled Substances Act to reflect that drug use in itself is not a crime, and that persons living in the United States arrested for using drugs should not be incarcerated with those who have committed victim oriented crimes.
- c. Legalize possession, sale, and cultivation of cannabis/marijuana.
- d. Strike from the record prior felony convictions for marijuana possession, sale, or cultivation.
- e. Grant amnesty and release from confinement without any further parole or probation, those who have been incarcerated for the use, sale, or cultivation of marijuana in federal and state prisons and in county/city jails, and who otherwise are without convictions for victim oriented crimes, or who do not require treatment for abuse of hard drugs. Provide the option for drug treatment to those leaving confinement.
- f. Implement a step-by-step program to decriminalize all drugs in the United States.

I. Population

Humans have a unique responsibility for stewardship of the Earth. No species,

especially on the upper end of the food chain, can have unchecked exponential growth without depleting the Earth's carrying capacity – human population expands at the expense of other species.

Limiting the discussion to population numbers and birthrates diverts attention from over-consumption in the industrial world and historic patterns of exploitation of developing countries. Consumption-oriented lifestyles that have evolved in the industrial world have resulted in a minority of people consuming a majority of resources. This is as significant a threat to the Earth's carrying capacity as the high birth rates in low-consumption countries.

Current global demographics demonstrate that economic wellbeing promotes low birthrates. Any discussion of population must also be a discussion of women throughout the world. There is documented evidence that the economic and social status of women is a primary factor in birthrates – when women have control over their lives, birthrates decrease. Also, a major barrier to the improvement of women's reproductive health is a lack of shared responsibility between men and women in family planning. A combination of male attitudes and cultural traditions have resulted in most men being under-educated and uninvolved in the planning of their families.

Globally, human population is increasing while food production has leveled off. When population increases faster than the economy grows, the disparity between rich and poor also increases. Higher human consumption rates and populations increase the pressure on the environment in every ecological problem area.

1. Those living in the industrialized world must end the habits of waste and over-consumption that place as much stress on the environment as does population growth in developing nations.
2. We must remove the political and economic barriers that prevent women around the world from having all the resources necessary to become skilled family planners.
3. Funds must be allocated for expanded scientific research into

safer and more effective birth control techniques and devices. We demand better-than-adequate health care for women and children – especially prenatal care. *[See section D. Foreign Policy in chapter I and section A.1. Women's Rights in this chapter]*

4. There must be access to free birth control devices, information counseling, and clinics to all who desire them. We call for implementation of family planning education for both genders in all levels of the state school system. *[See section D. Foreign Policy in chapter I and section A.1. Women's Rights in this chapter]*
5. We must promote new traditions and images of men becoming fully involved in all aspects of the family planning process.

J. Immigration/Emigration

Immigration and particularly the large number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. has become a hot political issue. Laws to oppress immigrants have been proposed in the Congress. Millions of immigrants and supporters of justice for immigrants have marched in the streets. Politicians have stirred up anti-immigrant sentiment among sections of the U.S. population.

It also must be acknowledged that the trigger for such an influx of immigrants in this country has been largely due to unfair US trade policies. If it were economically possible to provide for their families many would choose to remain in their native countries. Any immigration policy should be seen a way to address all people's humanitarian needs as we undo the damage to local communities and chart a course toward sustainable local economies.

The Green Party stands firmly for social justice for all those living in this country regardless of their immigration status. Above all, policy and law must be humane. Anything less would be inconsistent with our Green Values, and with our nation's values.

The Green Party accepts as a goal a world in which persons can freely choose to live in and work in any county he or she desires. We recognize that this would

be impractical without reciprocity between nations. We seek that reciprocity as a practical goal. Countries do have a right to know the identity of persons seeking to enter. They also have the right to limit who can come in to protect public safety.

The U.S. needs a complete overhaul of its immigration laws. Our current situation has created extreme social injustice. Millions of people are living and working in the U.S. with no legal status, making them subject to extreme exploitation and abuse. Immigration raids are terrorizing the immigrant community. Families are being broken up. Employer abuses of undocumented workers are rampant.

The Green Party must consider immigration issues from an international standpoint, taking into account international labor and environmental standards, and human rights.

The following proposals may not yield perfect answers, but they provide better answers than the status quo. We must recognize that there cannot be any true solutions to the conflicts created by immigration until we are able to organize globally to overcome the power of multinational corporations, which are engaged in an unending campaign to drive down workers' living standards everywhere. International cooperation and solidarity among labor organizations, to advance the rights of labor and raise such living standards globally, are essential to combat this trend. Until the power of the multinationals is curbed, we will continue to be confronted with seemingly "no win" choices.

While working toward that goal, we propose the following immigration policies, consistent with the Ten Key Values.

1. Policy Reform

The undocumented immigrants who are already residing and working in the United States, and their families, should be granted a legal status which includes the chance to become U.S. citizens. Persons should be excluded from this process only if they present a clear and present danger to other members of our society. The level of fees required for this process should not be a burden

on low-income workers. In any path to citizenship created to provide an orderly and appropriate resolution of the status of persons currently in the United States without proper documentation, we demand a recognition of past, uncredited payments into the Social Security System as part of any fees assessed for regularization of status. In regard to who should have a right to come and live and work in the U.S. we believe the following policies are fair:

- a. The Green Party calls for permanent border passes to all citizens of Mexico and Canada whose identity can be traced and verified. The "matricula consular" should be accepted as one means of proving one's identity. Work permits for citizens of Mexico and Canada must be easily obtainable, thereby decriminalizing the act of gainful employment. This action would help eliminate exploitation of undocumented persons by criminals engaged in human contraband (coyotes) and unethical employers. It would also help ensure that taxes will be paid in each corresponding nation per its laws. These measures will also help temporary residents from Mexico and Canada to secure driving privileges and liability insurance.
- b. All persons fleeing political, racial, religious, or other types of persecution must be welcomed and given permanent resident status. The history of arbitrary denial of political asylum claims must be ended. Particular attention should be given to those minorities who are political exiles and refugees and those whose lives would be at risk if asylum is not granted.
- c. Family reunification must be a priority in accepting applications for permanent residency. The years of waiting that families are currently put through must be ended.
- d. Permanent residency should not be denied based on political views, racial or national origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or any other arbitrary basis.

- e. There are many countries in the world where the economic policies and military actions of the U.S. government or U.S. based corporations have caused extreme hardships. The peoples of these countries deserve special consideration if they wish to come to the U.S. to escape intolerable conditions created by our government or U.S. corporations.
- f. We must keep faith with our commitment to the United Nations, to assist in the resettlement, including to our own country, of refugees currently stranded in refugee camps in other parts of the world.
- g. All those who are issued work permits must have the option to come and go from the U.S. as they desire. They must also have the option of remaining in the U.S. and becoming U.S. Citizens.

2. Interim Measures

Recognizing that a just reform of immigration policy may take some time, the Green Party supports:

- a. Measures to allow undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers licenses if they can prove their identity and pass the required tests. This will improve road safety and allow the undocumented who are driving in any case to obtain insurance.
- b. Measures to give legal status to undocumented immigrants who graduate from high school in the U.S. and who are otherwise qualified, to allow them to attend colleges and universities on an equal basis with other high school graduates. The Green Party is opposed to efforts to force undocumented youth into becoming cannon fodder for the U.S. military as the price for legal status.
- c. Reduce wait lists and make the system work more efficiently: current numeric caps on immigrant visas must be increased. The current system of quotas and preferences has to be thoroughly

and realistically reformed. Current backlogs must be brought up to date as soon as possible. Wait times for processing and resolving immigration benefit applications should be reduced to no more than six months. Pre-1996 screening criteria for legal permanent residency and citizenship applications should be restored.

- d. The understandable concern about immigrant workers competing for jobs with current citizens cannot and should not be addressed by criminalizing undocumented immigration or punishing fellow victims of U.S. corporatist policies. Instead, we must reverse these policies. Among other things, we should repeal NAFTA, CAFTA, Fast Track and other corporate globalization policies. We must stop using our tax dollars to subsidize corporate agribusiness and to promote poverty in Latin America, and start using them to help reward environmentally responsible family farmers, encourage improved infrastructure and economic conditions in Latin America, and raise labor standards, at home and abroad. Here at home, we must also promote the policies, as outlined in the Economy and Workers' Rights sections of this Platform, that can help us achieve a full employment economy at a living wage, including strictly enforcing and expanding the rights of all workers to form unions.
- e. We advocate an end to employer sanctions, which have been shown to hurt not only undocumented workers but also U.S.-born workers (especially those of color). Instead, the focus on employers must be to vigorously enforce our wage and labor laws. Instead of further victimizing the victims of corporate globalization, create real opportunities and raise labor standards for all!
- f. We oppose the provision of current law which allows local police to become agents of the immigration agency. Local policing functions should be totally separate from immigration

enforcement.

- g. Greens oppose "English-only" legislation. Immigrants already have ample incentive to learn English. But when interaction with the government is limited to the English speaking, persons are put at additional risk of exploitation. The focus needs to be on providing adequate and accessible English language instruction and assistance. We advocate legislation to ensure that federal funds marked for communities to provide ESL (English as second language) training, and health and social support services to immigrants actually go to them. When funds are spent in other areas, immigrants are being deprived of benefits that they earn as productive workers in their communities. Meanwhile, courts, social service agencies, and all government agencies dealing with the public must provide trained and certified translators. Additionally, the language rights of peoples who were in this land before it became part of the U.S., including Native Americans and Mexicans in the Southwest, must be recognized and respected.
- h. We oppose the militarization of our borders, (mis)using the National Guard as border police, and building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico. This will further intensify the human rights disaster our immigration policy has become, as well as seriously harm border ecosystems. We demand an immediate end to policies designed to force undocumented border-crossers into areas where conditions dramatically increase the risk of permanent injury or death, destruction of fragile environments, and the cutting off of corridors needed by wildlife for migration within their habitat. For these reasons we specifically oppose the walling off of both traditional urban crossing areas and of wilderness areas. We also call for the immediate dismantling of the border wall. We mourn the death of those thousands of men, women and children who have died trying to cross this border, where a couple of decades ago such deaths were

virtually unheard of.

- i. We must resist proposals that use illegal immigration as an excuse to put us all under further government monitoring and control by means of a national ID card or other identification or tracking systems. We also oppose the imposition of the "E-Verify" system to screen people applying for jobs. Citizen workers who have been propagandized to support "tougher" measures to identify and apprehend undocumented workers need to carefully consider what they are asking for. The same snare they want the government to use against undocumented workers can easily be used to repress them. Our government is already engaged in illegal spying and surveillance of its own citizens. It is already invading our privacy. A national ID card system is one of the hallmarks of a totalitarian government or police state. We need to repeal the Real ID Act and resist the establishment of any system that would suppress freedom to travel and require citizens and non-citizens alike to "show their papers" and reveal their private information to government monitors at every turn.
- j. We demand recognition of the sovereignty of indigenous nations whose territories cross national boundaries. These indigenous nations have the right to determine the status of their members.
- k. We demand new policies and laws that deal more effectively and humanely with the victims of illegal international trafficking in humans — primarily women and children who are bought, kidnapped, coerced, brutalized, defrauded, tricked, sold and marketed for forced sex (rape) and prostitution, with an estimated 50,000 trafficked to the U.S.
- l. We call for stiffer, more appropriate policy, structure and laws to deal with traffickers, and also demand that procedures to

deport victims before the traffickers are prosecuted must be changed to allow the victims to testify against the traffickers, which plays a major role in bringing these cases to justice and helping stem the tide of this heinous crime. The victims of trafficking should have the option of permanent residence in the U.S. or return to their home countries, according to their own choice.

K. Housing and Homelessness

People have a right to a home and to be secure in their tenancy. However the supply of affordable housing is not meeting the need, while in an era of increasing deregulation, many tenants are losing important legal protections.

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. At the same time, rent control and tenant eviction protections do not exist in most jurisdictions, and where they do, they are often inadequate and under attack. State governments continue to weaken or preempt local rent control laws, while landlords who violate housing code requirements by failing to keep their property in habitable condition, are often tolerated or given lenient penalties. Housing discrimination also remains rampant against people of color, immigrants, disabled, single people, gays and lesbians, and families with children.

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 – for example, the homeless – 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 recommends the following actions:

Renters/Tenants' Rights

Guarantee tenant's rights, including: freedom from harassment and evictions without just cause; well-enforced habitability standards; strong anti-discrimination enforcement, including family protection laws and domestic partnerships; continuation of established services and amenities; the right to reasonable guest visitation; maintenance of roommate privileges; and the right to communicate with other tenants about conditions or circumstances in their buildings.

Enact and enforce strong penalties for landlords who violate these rights.

Fund public and non-profit tenant-related counseling and legal assistance for renters.

Rent Control

Defend and expand cities' right to enact local rent control laws, including vacancy control/recontrol, that fit the needs of their communities.

Provide for publicly elected Rent Control/Stabilization Boards for communities with local rent control laws.

Preserve and Increase Affordable Housing Supply

Defend and expand cities' ability to enact affordable housing inclusionary ordinances that fit the needs of their communities, so that the private sector will contribute its share of affordable housing construction.

Provide funding for publicly built affordable housing, including funding for non-profit corporations that build affordable housing.

Enact zoning to promote mixed-use development along transit corridors to locate housing next to jobs and public transportation. Lower parking requirements for new multi-family development to lower cost of construction to enable greater affordability.

Regulate and limit the legal conversion of existing affordable housing into hotels, motels and short-term vacation rentals and establish and enforce laws to prevent illegal conversions.

Fair Housing

Enforce and strengthen the federal Fair Housing Act and other federal and state fair-housing laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, familial status and national origin.

Increase funding to assist people who believe they have been victims of housing discrimination and support and fund fair housing enforcement and education across the nation. Consider establishment of an independent Fair Housing Enforcement Agency outside of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to improve enforcement and restore public confidence in the implementation of federal fair housing policies.

Require that communities that receive federal housing funds provide evidence that their housing policies are affirmatively furthering fair housing.

Amend the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program to increase access of eligible families to high opportunity 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.

Amend the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program to include fair housing requirements for site selection, affirmative marketing, and reporting of racial/ethnic data to ensure that this program works to further fair housing goals.

Ensure that fair housing principles are emphasized in programs addressing the mortgage and financial crisis.

Revive the President's Fair Housing Council to coordinate federal activities across agencies to support fair housing.

Measures to Address Homelessness

Prevent homelessness before it occurs by addressing its structural causes,

through raising the income floor under the working poor, creating living-wage jobs, providing job training and education that will enable low-wage workers to obtain living-wage jobs, preserving and expanding affordable housing, providing affordable health care, ensuring sufficient mental health care and substance abuse services, availability of healthy food and providing effective, holistic assistance that connects vulnerable individuals with sources of income and essential services.

Recognize that there are multiple, related and individualized causes of homelessness, and develop solutions that address them. Maintain and expand the social services necessary to address the varied aspects of homelessness.

Move people rapidly into stable living arrangements, where they will not be under constant threat of displacement or worrying about untreated health problems or other personal difficulties. Support and encourage service integration at all levels and move beyond the shelter approach to provide supportive housing that combines accommodation and an array of necessary services, to transition people out of homelessness.

Responding creatively to provide additional transitional housing through master leasing of private apartment blocks; purchase for-profit single room occupancy hotels; and where feasible, conversion of short-term emergency shelter facilities into permanent supportive housing.

Provide the resources necessary to advocate, develop and monitor discharge practices of local hospitals, jails and foster care through a zero-tolerance policy for discharging people to the streets.

Increase employment for homeless people. Set aside a share of public-sector jobs for homeless people who are able to work. Ensure that public agencies devoted to job creation are active in providing job training and work opportunities for homeless residents. Support non-profit agencies that do the same.

Ensure that public assistance is enough to allow recipients to afford a roof over their head. Help homeless who are entitled to federal Social Security benefits and veterans' disability payments to obtain them.

Repeal laws that criminalize homelessness.

Involve homeless people in decision-making about short- and long-term solutions to homelessness.

Educate homeless people about their right to vote. Encourage voter registration and voter participation among homeless people.

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