

OFFICIAL NATIONAL

Green Party Platform

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GREEN PARTY PLATFORM

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A CALL TO ACTION

The GREEN PLATFORM is an evolving document, a living work-in-progress that expresses our commitment to creating meaningful and enduring change in the political process. Our Party's first priority is to value-based politics, in contrast to a system extolling exploitation, consumption, and non-sustainable competition.

We believe in an alternative, independent politics and active, responsible government.

We believe in empowering citizens and communities.

We offer hope and a call to action.

In this platform we make our case to change the way our government operates – to change the quality of our everyday lives – to build a vision that brings new and lasting opportunities.

PLATFORM PREAMBLE

As the new century dawns, we look back with somber reflection at how we have been as a people and as a nation. Realizing our actions will be judged by future generations, we ask how with foresight and wisdom, we can renew the best of our past, calling forth a spirit of change and participation that speaks for a free and democratic society.

We submit a bold vision of our future, a PLATFORM on which we stand:

- An ethic of KEY VALUES leading to a POLITICS OF ACTION.
- A hopeful, challenging plan for A PROSPERING, SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY.
- A call to CREATE and CONSERVE a rich, DIVERSE environment characterized by a sense of COMMUNITY.

What we are proposing is a vision of our common good that goes beyond special interests and the business of politics.

What we are proposing is an INDEPENDENT POLITICS, a democratic vision that empowers and reaches beyond background and political loyalty to bring together our combined strengths as a people.

We, the GREEN PARTY, see our political and economic progress, and our individual lives, within the context of an evolving, challenging world.

As in nature, where adaptation and diversity provide key strategies of survival, a successful political strategy is one that is diverse, adaptable to changing needs, and strong and resilient in its core values:

- DEMOCRACY, practiced most effectively at the grassroots level and in local communities.
- SOCIAL JUSTICE and EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, emphasizing personal and social responsibility, accountability, and non-violence.
- ENVIRONMENTAL and ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY, balancing the interests of market- and value-driven business, of the community and land, of living and future generations.

Looking to the future with hope and optimism, we believe we can truly change history – that together we can make a real difference in the quality of our lives and environment. Our common destiny brings us together across our nation and around the globe. It is for us to choose how we will be remembered. It is for us to choose the future we are creating today.

GREEN KEY VALUES

1. GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY

Every human being deserves a say in the decisions that affect their lives and not be subject to the will of another. Therefore, we will work to increase public participation at every level of government and to ensure that our public representatives are fully accountable to the people who elect them. We will also work to create new types of political organizations which expand the process of participatory democracy by directly including citizens in the decision-making process.

2. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

All persons should have the rights and opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. We must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society

at large, barriers such as racism and class oppression, sexism and homophobia, ageism and disability, which act to deny fair treatment and equal justice under the law.

3. ECOLOGICAL WISDOM

Human societies must operate with the understanding that we are part of nature, not separate from nature.

We must maintain an ecological balance and live within the ecological and resource limits of our communities and our planet. We support a sustainable society which utilizes resources in such a way that future generations will benefit and not suffer from the practices of our generation. To this end we must practice agriculture which replenishes the soil; move to an energy efficient economy; and live in ways that respect the integrity of natural systems.

4. NONVIOLENCE

It is essential that we develop effective alternatives to society's current patterns of violence. We will work to demilitarize, and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, without being naive about the intentions of other governments.

We recognize the need for self-defense and the defense of others who are in helpless situations. We promote non-violent methods to oppose practices and policies with which we disagree, and will guide our actions toward lasting personal, community and global peace.

5. DECENTRALIZATION

Centralization of wealth and power contributes to social and economic injustice, environmental destruction, and militarization. Therefore, we support a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions away from a system which is controlled by and mostly benefits the powerful few, to a democratic, less bureaucratic system. Decision-making should, as much as possible, remain at the individual and local level, while assuring that civil rights are protected for all citizens.

6. COMMUNITY-BASED ECONOMICS AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

We recognize it is essential to create a vibrant and sustainable economic system, one that can create jobs and provide

a decent standard of living for all people while maintaining a healthy ecological balance. A successful economic system will offer meaningful work with dignity, while paying a “living wage” which reflects the real value of a person’s work.

Local communities must look to economic development that assures protection of the environment and workers’ rights; broad citizen participation in planning; and enhancement of our “quality of life.” We support independently owned and operated companies which are socially responsible, as well as co-operatives and public enterprises that distribute resources and control to more people through democratic participation.

7. FEMINISM AND GENDER EQUITY

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

8. RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

We believe it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across these lines.

We believe that the many diverse elements of society should be reflected in our organizations and decision-making bodies, and we support the leadership of people who have been traditionally closed out of leadership roles. We acknowledge and encourage respect for other life forms than our own and the preservation of biodiversity.

9. PERSONAL AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

We encourage individuals to act to improve their personal well-being and, at the same time, to enhance ecological balance and social harmony. We seek to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of the planet.

10. FUTURE FOCUS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Our actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals. We seek to

protect valuable natural resources, safely disposing of or “unmaking” all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival. We must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Our overall goal is not merely to survive, but to share lives that are truly worth living. We believe the quality of our individual lives is enriched by the quality of all of our lives. We encourage everyone to see the dignity and intrinsic worth in all of life, and to take the time to understand and appreciate themselves, their community and the magnificent beauty of this world.

I. DEMOCRACY

Democracy must empower all citizens to:

- obtain timely, accurate information from their government;
- communicate such information and their judgments to one another through modern technology;
- band together in civic associations in pursuit of a prosperous, just and free society.

The separation of ownership of major societal assets from their control permits the concentration of power over such assets in the hands of the few who control rather than in the hand of the many who own. The owners of the public lands, pension funds, savings accounts, and the public airwaves are the American people, who have essentially little or no control over their pooled assets or their commonwealth.

A growing and grave imbalance between the often-converging power of Big Business, Big Government and the citizens of this country has seriously damaged our democracy.

Corporations have perfected socializing their losses while they capitalize on their profits.

It’s time to end “corporate welfare” as we know it. The power of “civic action” is an antidote to abuse. As we look at the dismantling of democracy by the corporatization of society, we need to rekindle the democratic flame. As voter citizens, taxpayers, workers, consumers and shareholders, we need to exercise our rights and, as Jefferson urged, counteract the “excesses of the monied interests.”

A. Political Reform

1. The Green Party, proposes a **COMPREHENSIVE POLITICAL REFORM AGENDA** calling for real reform, accountability, and responsiveness in government.
2. Political debate, public policy, and legislation should be judged on its merits, not on the quid pro quo of political barter and money.
3. We propose comprehensive **CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM**, including caps on spending and contributions, at the national and state level, and/or full public financing of elections” to remove undue influence in political campaigns.
4. We will work to ban or greatly limit **POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES** and restrict **SOFT MONEY** contributions.
5. We support significant lobbying regulation, strict rules that disclose the extent of political lobbying via “gifts” and contributions. Broad-based reforms of government operations, with congressional reorganization and **ETHICS LAWS**, must be instituted. At every level of government, we support “Sunshine Laws” that open up the political system to access by ordinary citizens.
6. We recognize individual empowerment, full citizen participation, and **PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION** as the foundation of an effective and **PLURALISTIC** democracy.
7. We demand choices in our political system. This can be accomplished by proportional representation voting systems such as: 1) Choice Voting (which is candidate-based) 2) Mixed Member Voting (which combines with district representation) ; and/or 3) Party List (which is party based), and semi-proportional voting systems such as: 1) Limited Voting and 2) Cumulative Voting. All are used throughout the free world and by U.S. businesses, and community and non-profit groups to increase democratic representation. We call on local governments to lead the way toward more electoral choice and broader representation.
8. We believe in **MAJORITY RULE**. Accordingly, we call for the use of **INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING** in chief executive races (mayor, governor, president, etc.) where voters can rank their favorite candidates (1,2,3, etc.) to guarantee that the winner has majority support and that voters aren’t relegated to choosing between the “lesser of two evils.”
9. We believe in **MULTI-PARTY DEMOCRACY** (for partisan elections) as

the best way to guarantee majority rule, since more people will have representation at the table where policy is enacted.

10. The Electoral College is an 18th century anachronism. We call for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College and providing for the direct election of the president by Instant Runoff Voting. Until that time, we call for a proportional allocation of delegates.

11. We encourage building alternative, grassroots institutions that support participatory and direct democracy at the local level. Political reform goes beyond elected politics, ultimately residing in choices each of us makes in our own lives.

12. Using our voice to help others find their voice, a national Green Party should spring from many sources: state and local Green Party electoral efforts, individual efforts, political involvement and direction at every level. As Greens, we look toward forming bioregional confederations to coordinate regional issues based on natural and ecosystem boundaries instead of traditional political ones.

B. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

1. Greens advocate direct democracy as a response to local needs and issues, where all concerned citizens can discuss and decide questions that immediately affect their lives, such as land use, parks, schools and community services. We would decentralize many state functions to the county and city level and seek expanded roles for neighborhood boards and associations.

2. We call for more flexibility by states and local decision-making.

3. We advocate maintaining and enhancing federal guarantees in the areas of civil rights protections, environmental safeguards, and social “safety net” entitlements.

4. We endorse and advocate citizen rights to INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM and RECALL. We believe that these tools of democracy should not be for sale to the wealthy who pay for signatures to buy their way onto the ballot. Therefore we call for a certain percentage of signatures gathered to come from volunteer collectors.

5. We call for citizen control of REDISTRICTING processes and moving the “backroom” apportionment process into the public light. Minority representation must be protected and secured in order to protect minority rights.

6. We will act to broaden voter participation and BALLOT ACCESS, urging UNIVERSAL VOTER REGISTRATION and an ELECTION DAY HOLIDAY.

7. We believe that a binding “None of the Above” option on the ballot should be considered.

8. We believe that providing free television and mail under reasonable conditions for every qualified statewide, congressional, presidential candidate and party can move the political process toward increased participation.

9) We support statehood for the District of Columbia. The residents of D.C. must have the same rights as all other U.S. citizens to govern themselves and to be represented in both houses of Congress.

10. Individual participation in the life of our local community – in community projects and through personal, meaningful, voluntary activity – is also political and vital to the health of community.

11. We support citizen involvement at all levels of the decision-making process and hold that DIRECT ACTION can be an effective tool where peaceful democratic activism is appropriate. We support the right to non-violent direct action that supports green values. We call for the implementation of Children's Parliaments, whereby representatives elected by students to discuss, debate and make proposals to their city councils and school boards.

C. COMMUNITY

Community is the basic unit of green politics because it is personal, value-oriented and small enough for each member to have an impact. We look to community involvement as a foundation for public policy. Social diversity is the well-spring of community life, where old and young, rich and poor, people of all races and beliefs can interact individually and learn to care for each other, to understand and cooperate. We emphasize a return to local, face-to-face relationships that humans can understand, cope with, and care about.

Within the Greens, as we look at community issues, it is a guiding principle to “think globally, act locally.” Community needs recognize a diversity of issues, and LOCAL CONTROL recognizes a variety of approaches to solving problems, one that tends to be “bottom up” not “top down.” Green politics does not place its faith in paternalistic “big government.” Instead, we believe face-to-face interactions are essential to productive and meaningful lives for all citizens.

The Green vision includes building communities that nurture families, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; creating cities and towns that

educate children, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources; building local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime, and motivate citizens to participate in making decision.

The Green vision calls for a GLOBAL COMMUNITY of communities, recognizing our immense diversity, respecting our personal worth, and sharing a global perspective. We call for “A POLITICS OF 2000,” which acknowledges our endangered planet and habitat. Our politics responds to global crisis with a new way of seeing our shared INTERNATIONAL SECURITY.

We conceive of a new era of international cooperation and communication, a set of responses nurturing CULTURAL DIVERSITY, recognizing the interconnectedness between communities, and promoting opportunities for cultural exchange and assistance.

1. We call for increased PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, and convenient playgrounds and parks for all sections of cities and small towns, and funding to encourage diverse neighborhoods.

2. We support a rich milieu of art, culture, and significant (yet modestly funded) programs such as the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities.

3. We call for social policies to focus on protecting FAMILIES. The young – our citizens of tomorrow – are increasingly at risk. A “CHILDREN’S AGENDA” should be put in place to focus attention and concerted action on the future that is in our children.

4. Programs must be encouraged to ensure that children, the most vulnerable members of society, will receive basic nutritional, educational and medical necessities.

5. A universal, federally funded CHILDCARE program for pre-school and young schoolchildren should be developed.

6. Family assistance such as the EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT, available to working poor families in which the parent supports and lives with the children, should be maintained and increased to offset regressive payroll taxes and growing inequalities in American society.

7. We support successful PRE-NATAL programs and “HEAD START.”

8. It is our realization that “a living family wage” is vital to the social health of communities.

9. The actuarial protection of SOCIAL SECURITY is essential to the well-being of our seniors, and the maintenance of the

system's integrity is an essential part of a healthy community.

10. We support the leading-edge work of NON-PROFIT PUBLIC INTEREST GROUPS, and those individuals breaking out of "careerism" to pursue NON-TRADITIONAL CAREERS in public service.

D. FOREIGN POLICY

As we look back at the wars and deprivations of the past, and set our minds to overcoming continued conflicts and violence, we realize the difficulties inherent in encouraging democracy, and of advancing THE CAUSE OF PEACE. With the end of the Cold War has come a more complex set of challenges in how our nation defines its NATIONAL SECURITY. Our present task is to rid ourselves of the residue of the geopolitical conflict of East versus West, with its bloated defense budgets, thousands of unneeded nuclear weapons and major troop deployments overseas. Greens support sustainable development and social and economic justice across the globe. Reducing militarism and reliance on arms policies is the key to progress toward collective security.

1. With half of all discretionary spending now going to the military, the president requesting spending even the Pentagon thinks is wasteful, and the Congress proposing even more than the president requests, Greens believe the more than \$300 billion DEFENSE BUDGET MUST BE CUT. The Green Party calls for military spending to be cut by 50% over the next 10 years, with increases in spending for social programs. Preventive diplomacy, a strong economy and humane trade relations are our best defense. We must maintain a viable American military force, prudent foreign policy doctrines, and readiness strategies that take into account real, not hollow or imagined threats to our people, our democratic institutions and U.S. interests. Even so, Greens seek strength through peace.

2. The Green Party would press for the immediate start of the negotiation of a treaty to abolish nuclear weapons, and for the completion of those negotiations by the year 2002. We would cut off all funding for the development, testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons, and also cut off funding for nuclear weapons research. All nuclear weapons should be taken off alert and all warheads removed from their delivery vehicles.

3. We call for our foreign policy establishment to engage in a national debate on how we can convert to a PEACETIME ECONOMY. We believe our nation's ultimate strength is in its people and a healthy economy. These will best protect our national security interests over the long-term.

4. We endorse a reordering of priorities as to how our nation can best achieve national security. The Green Party asserts that security and liberty prosper together. HUMAN RIGHTS are the foundation of EMERGING DEMOCRACIES and international relations. We argue that the support of democracy, human rights and respect for international law should be the cornerstone of American foreign policy.

5. We endorse ending support for repressive regimes. We believe the United States and all nations should abide by World Court decisions. We support the right of habeas corpus being available to any person anywhere whose imprisonment violates fundamental norms of international law.

6. It is our belief that the massive debt owed by the Third World is causing immense misery and environmental destruction.

FOREIGN AID must be addressed in the context of retiring this debt and not forcing "structural adjustments" via the INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF) and WORLD BANK on the economies of the underdeveloped world.

7. We call for a more enlightened policy on the part of INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES and their financial arms which takes into account the impact of international debt management. The United States should rein in the IMF and World Bank, whose policies have wreaked havoc, and demand that loans be conditional on human rights and labor rights records, social and environmental impact statements, and the providing of basic health and education.

8. INTERNATIONAL LAW and INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS are inseparable. We do not support a world-view that relies on accommodation of tyranny or repressive regimes.

9. We encourage policies that work to assist the FORMER SOVIET UNION in its move toward a government based on rights and a more open political and economic system.

10. We support peace in the MIDDLE EAST based on respect for civil liberties and human rights.

11. We endorse human rights policies in regard to relations with CHINA, SOUTH AFRICA and other nations with a history of rights violations.

12. We support the end of the economic blockade of Cuba. Unjust economic

coercion by one state against another constitutes a violation of human rights.

13. We demand, along with Green Parties around the world, that the United States support the international anti-personnel mine treaty.

14. As stated in the United Nation's "Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Article 25", the U.S. Green Party, one of more than eighty Green Parties internationally, calls for the global adoption of basic human rights. "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of [themselves] and of [their] family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond [their] control."

15. We believe in the core RIGHT of SELF-DETERMINATION; of the special character and needs of INDIGENOUS PEOPLES; of the essential importance of balancing economic development in the THIRD WORLD with a respect for the "old ways."

16. We trust that NON-VIOLENCE provides a road to PEACE. We understand the right of self-defense, yet believe we must move beyond behavior that perpetuates violence. We oppose structural and direct violence of all kinds: assaults against individuals, families, nations and cultures, the environment and the biosphere.

17. We endorse an EXPANDED PEACE CORPS.

18. We encourage the important work of NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS (NGOs), much in evidence at the United Nations "Earth Summit" in 1992 and in efforts to democratize the World Trade Organization in 2000.

19. Essential in any broad definition of SECURITY, whether defined in national, international or global terms, is that we must find ways to secure and preserve our common Earth, sustainer of all life. We must look to domestic and international regulation to protect the global ecology, utilizing the UNITED NATIONS and related agencies as well as regional associations to advance our mutual interests.

20. We must build on the "Earth Charter" that came out of the 1992 U.N. environmental Earth Summit. New definitions of what constitutes real security between nations must be debated and adopted by the foreign policy community.

II. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

A. EDUCATION

The failing report card of American education is troubling for most every American. Who fails to see the connection between our investment in education and our success as a people? Who believes there is no relation between personal achievement and a quality education – an education that teaches creative and critical thinking skills and a respect for lifelong learning? Where can we best make a difference in our future?

The Green Party maintains that access to quality education for all Americans is the difference that will lead to a strong and diverse community. The Green Party seeks fundamental change in our priorities at the national and local levels, within the public and private sectors, in the classroom and at home, to make education our first priority.

1. Greens support EDUCATIONAL DIVERSITY. We hold no dogma absolute, continually striving for truth in the realm of ideas. We open ourselves – consciously and intuitively – to truth and beauty in the world of nature. We view learning as a lifelong process to which all people have an equal right.

2. Education starts with CHOICE and within public education we believe in broad choices. “Magnet schools,” “Site-based Management,” “Schools within Schools,” alternative models and parental involvement are ways in which elementary education can be changed to make a real difference in the lives of our children. CURRICULUM should focus on SKILLS, both basic skills that serve as a solid foundation for higher learning, and exploratory approaches that expand horizons, such as distance learning, “interactive” education, computer proficiencies, perspectives that bring an enriched awareness of nature (“biological literacy”), intercultural experiences, and languages.

3. We advocate creative and noncompetitive education at every age level, and the inclusion of cultural diversity in all curricula. We encourage “hands on” approaches that encourage a multitude of individual learning styles.

4. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY should be encouraged by finding ways to help support parents in their efforts to help support their children as more families confront economic conditions demanding a greater deal of time be spent away from home. Parents should be as involved as

possible in their children’s education; values do start with parents.

5. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY is also key to developing intrinsic capabilities. Greens hold strongly to empowerment of individuals; therefore, we support each student recognizing their own personal responsibility: to strive to achieve their fullest potential as an individual.

6. FEDERAL POLICY on education should act principally to ensure equal opportunity to a quality education.

7. Educational funding formulas at the STATE LEVEL need to be adjusted as needed to avoid gross inequalities between districts and schools. Educational grants should provide necessary balance to ensure equal educational access for minority, deprived, special needs and exceptional children. In higher education, federal college scholarship aid should be increased and aimed at excluding no qualified student.

8. Our teachers find they are underpaid, overworked and rarely supplied with the resources necessary to do the work most are sincerely trying to do to reach their students. It is time to stop disinvesting in education, and start putting education at the top of our social and economic agenda.

9. We call on all Greens to include education as a regular part of our meetings so we can be clear about what unites us as well as what divides us.

10. We call for equitable state and national funding of school education and the creation of schools controlled by parent-teacher governing bodies.

11. We support after-school programs for “latchkey” children.

12. We advocate state funding for DAY CARE that includes school children under the age of ten when after-school programs are not available.

13. Classroom teachers at the elementary and high school levels should be given PROFESSIONAL STATUS, and salaries comparable to related professions requiring advanced education, training and responsibility.

14. Principals are also essential components in effective educational institutions. We encourage state Departments of Education and school boards to deliver more programmatic support and decision-making to the true grassroots level – i.e., the classroom teacher and school principal.

15. Use of computers in the early grades should not supplant the development of basic interpersonal, perceptual and motor skills as a foundation for learning.

16. We call for the teaching of non-violent conflict resolution at all levels of education.

17. We recognize the viable alternative of

HOME-BASED EDUCATION.

18. We support a host of innovative and critical educational efforts, such as BILINGUAL EDUCATION, CONTINUING EDUCATION, JOB RETRAINING, MENTORING AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS.

19. Dispute resolution is an important part of resolving classroom or after-school disputes, and a life skill that all children should learn.

20. We are deeply concerned about the intervention in our schools of corporations that promote a culture of consumption and waste. Schools should not expose children to commercial advertising. Schools must safeguard students’ privacy rights and not make available private student information upon corporate (or federal government) request.

21. Within higher education, we oppose military and corporate control over the priorities and topics of academic research.

22. We support tuition-free post secondary (collegiate and vocational) public education.

23. In an economy that demands higher skills and a democracy that depends on an informed, educated electorate, opportunities for universal higher education and life-long learning must be vastly expanded.

a.) Short of tuition-free schooling, student-loans should be available to all students attending college, and they should be repayable as a proportion of future earnings, rather than at a fixed rate.

b.) On the same terms, individualized training accounts should be made available to students who choose to pursue vocational and continuing education.

24. Freedom of artistic expression is a fundamental right and is a key element in empowering communities and 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 friction 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 which seek to restrict or censor artistic expression, including withholding of government funds for political or moral content.

c.) Increased funding for the arts appropriate to their essential social role at all levels of government: Local, State and Federal.

d.) Community-funded programs employing local artists to enrich their communities through public art programs. These could include, but would not be limited to, public performances, exhibitions, murals on public buildings, design or re-design of parks and public areas, storytelling and poetry reading, and publication of local writers.

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 (e.g., 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 and choosing 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 to every member of the community who demonstrates an interest

h.) Incorporating arts education studies and activities into every school curriculum with appropriate funding and staffing. We also 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 experience 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.

Greens view 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.

B. HEALTH CARE

Fundamental reform of our nation's health care system is necessary to provide affordable, quality and accessible health care for all Americans. Currently, we are the only industrialized country without a national health care system. Unfortunately, we have a private insurance system that insures only the healthiest people, systematically denying coverage to individuals with "pre-existing" conditions and routinely terminating coverage to those who become ill.

The Green Party considers health care a human right, and therefore supports a single-payer national insurance program for the United States. This program would be publicly financed at the national level, administered locally, and privately delivered, i.e., private physicians, hospitals, and other health care providers would remain private and competitive, and consumers given full choice of provider.

It would cover all standard medical procedures, treatment, diagnosis, etc. as well as drug treatment, dental care, medication, chronic and terminal illness, and abortion. The program must include equal coverage for treatment of mental illness. All Americans must be covered under this plan, regardless of employment, income, housing, age, or prior medical condition.

The Green Party believes, based on comparison with other nations that have enacted similar programs, that such a program would be more economical and would save money in many areas. In order to enact this program, we must dismantle the current managed care system.

The current system's high costs and widely recognized failures demand that bold, not incremental steps, be taken.

1. Alongside the many Americans calling for action that makes health care a right, not a privilege, the Green Party states with a clear voice its strong support for UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE.

2. We call for passage of legislation at the national and state level that guarantees comprehensive benefits for all Americans. A single-insurer system funded by the federal government and administered at the state and local levels remains viable and is

an essential barometer of our national health and well-being.

3. We support maintaining private medical providers, including doctors, hospitals and clinics...

4. As we support cost savings by small business, we note it is estimated that businesses will save significantly compared to their current premiums – an estimated \$900 billion – under a proposed SINGLE-PAYER "National Health Trust Fund" plan.

5. We endorse NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE and demand that Congress again propose and act to support the practical and moral imperative of Universal Health Care. Major features of this health care legislation should include:

a.) UNIVERSAL ACCESS without concern for work status or health history;

b.) FREEDOM OF HEALTH CARE CHOICE so patients can choose their own clinics, doctors or other health care professionals;

c.) substantial COST SAVINGS through annual, global budgets, national fee schedules, and streamlined administration which acts to eliminate the waste of the current system;

d.) COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS, without insurance premiums, deductibles or co-payments, including hospital and physician care, prescription drugs, dental and vision care, reproductive and preventative care, and defined mental health benefits;

e.) a focus on RURAL HEALTH SERVICES;

f.) and continued support of MEDICAL RESEARCH into the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of medical care.

6. MEDICARE provides health care for nearly 40 million Americans over the age of 65. Medicare: Part A is financed by the Medicare Trust Fund, which is replenished by payroll taxes. But as the major portion of the Fund's financing moves from these dedicated payroll taxes and premiums to general funds, the Fund's trustees predict insolvency looms, putting Medicare at risk. In order to correct this, we would vigorously pursue savings and cuts from abundant waste and fraud, eliminate costly, unnecessary services that benefit providers more than patients, and rein in pharmaceutical industry rip-offs.

7. MEDICAID, which pays for basic medical assistance for the disabled, blind, pregnant women, and children in families who have no insurance, also must be protected and put on a firm financial footing.

8. The prices of all kinds of medication must be publicly supervised, with federal

controls, and be set with respect to the needs of patients and consumers, instead of demands for commercial profit.

9. Successful reform of our health care system must start with WELLNESS education; that is, PREVENTATIVE health care. It is each of our responsibilities to tend to our own health through education, diet, nutrition and exercise.

10. The Surgeon General has stated that a large percentage of illness is diet related; therefore improving the quality of our nation's FOOD SUPPLY and our personal eating habits will go a long way toward improving our health care system – by reducing the need for care.

11. We support a wide-range of health care services, not just traditional medicine that too often emphasizes “a medical arms race” relying upon high-tech intervention and surgical techniques.

12. We support the teaching of holistic health approaches and, as appropriate, the use of complementary and alternative therapies such as herbal medicines, homeopathy, acupuncture, and other healing approaches.

13. We oppose the arrest, harassment or prosecution of anyone involved in any aspect of the production, cultivation, transportation, distribution or consumption of medicinal marijuana. We also oppose the harassment, prosecution or revocation of license of any health-care provider who gives a recommendation or prescription for medicinal marijuana.

14. As a matter of appropriate professional responsibility, we support INFORMED CONSENT LAWS to educate consumers to potential health impacts.

15. PRIMARY CARE, through a renewed attention to family medicine as opposed to increased medical specialization, is appropriate and necessary.

16. Special attention must be given to WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES, including reproductive rights and family planning.

17. We believe the right of a woman to control her own body is inalienable. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available.

18. Medical research must be increased, and alternative therapies actively sought, to combat breast cancer.

19. We call for adequate SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES being made available to those who have special needs: the mentally ill, the handicapped, those who are terminally ill.

20. We call for wider implementation of hospice care.

21. We believe an all out campaign must be waged against AIDS and HIV, and we will

press for the implementation of the recommendations of the National Commission on AIDS. We call for prevention awareness and access to condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS. We condemn HIV-related discrimination; would make drug treatment and other programs available for all addicts who seek help; would expand clinical trials for treatments and vaccines; and speed up the FDA drug approval process.

22. In matters of international trade, the United States must respect the measures other nations take to ensure public health, and must not use medication, medical equipment, and other medical necessities -- and threats of withholding them -- as leverage for political reasons or as extortion for the sake of commercial profit. We oppose any embargo or economic sanction that would cause the suffering of innocent civilians.

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 we 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 the states, city and county governments, local communities, businesses, churches – all of us – respond?

We believe we have a special responsibility to the health and well-being 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 stretched thin already?

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.

Welfare: A Commitment to Ending Poverty

The health of the planet is inseparably bound to the health of our human communities. Greens understand that 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 will consider the effects of such distribution not just on our present needs, but on the seventh generation to come.

The ones who suffer most from economic injustice are children - those who will inherit the social and environmental problems of the 20th century, and who will carry the responsibility of sustaining our society into the next millennium. Ensuring that children and their caregivers have access to an adequate, secure standard of living should form the cornerstone of our economic priorities.

It is time for a RADICAL PARADIGM 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 in present 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. 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.

1. We believe that all people have a right to food, housing, medical care, a living wage job, education, and support in times of hardship.

2. We believe that 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, but is not limited to: child and elder care; homemaking; voluntary community service; continuing education; participating in government; and the arts.

3. 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. This program should be funded through the existing welfare budget, reductions in military spending and corporate subsidies, and a fair progressive income tax.

4. 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.

5. We advocate reinvesting a significant portion of the military budget in family support, living wage job development, and work training programs. Publicly funded work training and education programs should have a goal of increasing people's employment options at living wage jobs.

6. 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, aids in schools, libraries and childcare centers, and construction and renovation of energy-efficient housing. We oppose enterprise zone 'give aways' which benefit corporations more than inner city communities

7. 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 distributions standards, and income tax policies that restrict the accumulation of excessive individual wealth.

8. Forcing welfare recipients to accept jobs that pay wages below a livable income ("a living wage") drives wages down and exploits workers for private profit at public expense. We reject "workfare" as a form a slave labor.

9. Corporations receiving public subsidies must provide livable wage jobs, observe basic workers rights, and agree to affirmative action policies of such distribution not just on our present needs, but on the seventh generation to come.

D. TAX JUSTICE / FAIRNESS

Middle-class and poor people are paying an ever greater proportion of federal taxes, and too often local and state taxes are unfair and regressive. The tax code is a labyrinth of deductions, loopholes, exemptions and write-offs, the result of insider- and industry-lobbying that has damaged our economy as it has served the

interests of big business and financial institutions.

1. We call for SYSTEM-WIDE TAX REFORM that acts to simplify the tax system.

2. Subsidies, export incentives, tax loopholes and tax shelters that benefit large corporations now amount to hundreds of billions of dollars each year and must be cut to the bone.

The high price of corporate welfare corrupts the political process by encouraging the exchange of political favors for campaign donations. Corporate tax breaks are ultimately paid for by higher taxes on the middle class; they distort the rules of the marketplace and seldom serve a larger public purpose.

We call for a tax policy that moves to eliminate loopholes and other exemptions that favor powerful interests over TAX JUSTICE. Small business, in particular, should not be penalized by a tax system which benefits those who can "work" the legislative tax committees for breaks and subsidies.

3. We support substantive and wide-ranging reform of the tax system that helps create jobs, economic efficiencies and innovation within the small business community.

4. We believe fiscal and tax policies should confront and end destructive "corporate welfare" and subsidies. Smaller businesses are America's great strength. Greens believe government should have a tax policy that encourages small- and socially responsible business.

5. Where corporations act with corporate citizenship, that is, with "fiduciary responsibility" that includes the interests of their community and employees as well as shareholders, we support appropriate tax incentives.

6. We call on new approaches to taxation, such as ENVIRONMENTAL TAXES as a partial substitute for income taxes. Taxing industrial pollution is an idea long overdue. Environmental taxes of this type, and "true-cost pricing," will aid in transforming major industries from being non-sustainable in their use of natural resources to being sustainable in character.

7. We believe that we must take a closer look at the costs and benefits of consumption and VALUE-ADDED TAX approaches.

8. We do not support a FLAT TAX, but agree that the host of deductions and adjustments to income, dividends and miscellaneous revenue afforded under the current system to those at the top produces cynicism on the part of most Americans

toward their tax system and government.

9. We would raise corporate taxes. The corporate share of taxes has fallen from 33% in the 1940s to 15% today, while the individual share has risen from 44% to 73%, according to the Alliance for Democracy.

10. Greens support progressivity in taxation as a matter of principle, believing that those who benefit most from the system have a responsibility to return more, their "fair share."

11. We believe a central goal of tax policy should be "transparency" – that is, a system that is simple, understandable, and resistant to the machinations of special interests.

12. The Green Party opposes the "privatization" of Social Security. The Social Security trust fund, contrary to claims being made by Republican and Democrat candidates, is not about to "go broke" and does not need to be "fixed" by Wall Street. The alleged demise of Social Security benefits is based on what economist and former Clinton cabinet member Robert Reich has called "the wildly pessimistic assumption" that the economy will grow only 1.8% annually over the next three decades. At a more realistic 2.4% a year, Reich points out (what the current White House budget predicts for the next five years), "the fund is flush for the next 75 years."

Considering that the bottom 20% of American senior citizens get roughly 80% of their income from Social Security, and that without Social Security nearly 70% of black elderly and 60% of Latino elderly households would be in poverty, it is critical that the public protections of Social Security are not privatized and subjected to increased risk based on misleading projections of shortfalls.

E. MANAGEMENT-LABOR RELATIONS

1. In the PRIVATE SECTOR, we acknowledge the many challenges responsible SMALL BUSINESS must overcome to remain competitive with big business, and we support addressing these obstacles by creating cooperative relationships and effective communication in the workplace.

2. The concepts of ECONOMIC AND WORKPLACE DEMOCRACY must be expanded in management-labor negotiations because the decisions a company makes affects its employees, its consumers, and the surrounding communities. In order to protect the legitimate interests of these various constituencies, as well as the natural environment, people in each of these groups

must be empowered to participate in economic decision-making.

3. There should be no compromise of basic WORKER RIGHTS.

4. We support a fair MINIMUM WAGE, which, adjusted for inflation, is still well below the purchasing power it had throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

5. We endorse federal legislation to address problems associated with large plant closings; WORKPLACE SAFETY and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reform; and National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) reform.

6. We particularly support substantive reforms toward “workplace democracy” in large corporations, especially reform that impacts socially and environmentally irresponsible big business.

7. We endorse legal rights to organize and join unions with democratically elected leadership.

8. We encourage the use of mediation as a tool for resolving disputes in the workplace.

9. We support the right to strike without being “permanently replaced.”

10. We support employee stock ownership plans (ESOP’s) with functioning, democratic structures; and cooperative ownership and management.

11. In the PUBLIC SECTOR, Greens are concerned with an employee’s right to join a union, and with associated COLLECTIVE BARGAINING rights.

12. “Good” government demands effective and efficient management, that is, wisely spending the people’s hard-earned tax dollars. We support initiatives between management and labor that produce “better” government through performance, productivity and accountability.

13. We believe government is truly the “people’s business” and serious reform proposals should be given close attention.

F. CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1. A plan to revitalize our economy must be a central element of any overall plan to reduce crime. Fear of violent crime is growing and it is our belief that the breaking of the bonds of community, the economic and social root causes of crime, must be addressed in the same way politicians today propose putting more firepower on the streets; threatening criminals with harsher sentences (“three strikes and you’re out”); and building more prisons.

2. The advent of a “prison industrial complex” in the United States has become a national disgrace. The Green Party raises a united voice in opposition to the terrible

inequities within the criminal justice system, the systemic injustice and prejudice, the lack of adequate legal representation for the poor and under privileged, the gross punishments mandated under punitive sentencing laws that fill the jails, prisons and penitentiaries with non-violent offenders.

3. The Green Party opposes privatizing of prisons.

4. Any attempt to combat crime must begin with restoration of community; positive approaches that build hope, responsibility and a sense of belonging.

5. Young men and women must have access to work that pays a family a living wage.

6. We would initiate social programs that are alternatives to gangs, such as “Gang Intervention Units.” Practical education with a real promise of a future is needed if we are to expect long-term success in this struggle, especially against street crime and hard drug trafficking.

7. We encourage our political leaders to remember that “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” With the costs of maintaining a prisoner far outstripping the costs of educating a child, or the costs of providing job training, or job creation incentives, or providing adequate social services and a “social net” to those in need, we believe it is only appropriate to focus on where our societal intervention can be most successful and effective.

8. At the same time, we must develop law enforcement approaches that are firm and directly address VIOLENT CRIME, street crime, and trafficking in hard drugs. Violence that creates a climate of further violence must be stopped.

9. While toughening penalties for violent crimes, it is inappropriate to have a de facto policy of leniency to “WHITE COLLAR CRIME.” We believe broad corporate crime legislation should be enacted and enforced. We support efforts that target the worst cases of corporate (and governmental and defense industry) illegality, and we support resultant sentencing (and fines) that acts “with teeth” as an effective deterrent.

10. We recommend establishing effective, independent CIVILIAN REVIEW of complaints of police misconduct.

11. We support the ‘Brady Bill’ and thoughtful, carefully considered GUN CONTROL.

12. We endorse PRISON EDUCATION and JOB TRAINING.

13. We support innovative approaches to rehabilitation, and transitioning of non-violent criminals back into their communities.

14. We do not support, as a matter of

conscience, the DEATH PENALTY.

15. We support JUDICIAL REFORM that opens up the court system, makes it affordable and convenient to ordinary citizens, and provides for more efficient administration of justice.

16. We support tough DWI laws.

17. We call for consistent policy of protection against VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS.

18. We endorse federal funding for RAPE CRISIS CENTERS and DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTERS. We call for rape and domestic violence prevention and education programs and stiffer sentences for people convicted of domestic violence.

19. VICTIMS’ RIGHTS must be guarded and protected. Victim-impact statements are appropriate vehicles for achieving full justice, and restitution should be considered in many cases to ensure victims will not be lost in the complexities of criminal justice.

20. We support decriminalization of “VICTIMLESS” CRIMES, for example, the possession of small amounts of marijuana.

21. We call for legalization of industrial hemp and all its many uses.

22. We oppose the illicit activities of the international drug trade and the illicit money laundering that often accompanies the drug cartels. We call for a revised view of the “drug problem” and an end to the “war on drugs,” recognizing that after over a decade of strident law-and-order posturing, the problems with hard drugs have only worsened.

23. We call for expanding drug counseling and treatment for those who need it.

24. We believe mandatory drug testing violates civil rights; therefore, we oppose mandatory testing.

25. We favor innovative sentencing and punishment options, including community service for first-time offenders and “Drug Court” diversion programs. We support alternative sentencing for non-violent crimes (i.e. community service) and guaranteed education within prison – G.E.D. courses and college courses as well as skill training and dispute resolution.

G. CIVIL 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. We should treasure and celebrate our people’s differences and diversity.

We recognize an intimate connection between our RIGHTS as individuals and our RESPONSIBILITIES to our neighbors

and the planet. The balance between rights and responsibilities is found as we provide for the maximum participation of everyone in the decisions affecting our well-being, our economic security, our social and international policies.

1. As Greens, we uphold the key value of respect for diversity. We recognize that the development of the United States has been marked by conflict over questions of race. Just as we acknowledge that our Nation was formed only after Native Americans were first displaced, we also acknowledge that the institution of slavery had as its underpinnings the ideology and practice of white supremacy, which we as Greens condemn. We know that, in slavery's aftermath, discrimination and racial violence against people of color continues to be a social problem of paramount significance, even today. We condemn discrimination and violence against anyone but also recognize that people of color have borne the brunt of racial violence and discrimination throughout the history of the United States.

a.) Therefore, we call for an end to official support for any remaining badges and indicia of slavery and specifically call for the immediate removal of the Confederate battle flag from any and all government buildings because we recognize that, to many, this remains a painful reminder of second-class status on the basis of race.

b.) In addition, we support efforts to overcome the aftereffects of over 200 years of discrimination and, hence, support affirmative action.

c.) Furthermore, we recognize that people of color have legitimate claims in this country to reparations in the form of monetary compensation for these centuries of discrimination. We also uphold the right of the descendants of the African slaves to self-determination, as we do for all indigenous peoples.

2. We, as Greens, are committed to establishing relationships that honor diversity; that support the self-definition and SELF-DETERMINATION of all people; and that consciously confront the barriers of racism, sexism, homophobia, class oppression, ageism, and the many ways our culture separates us from working together to define and solve our common problems.

3. We affirm the right to openly embrace SEXUAL ORIENTATION in the intimate choice of who we love.

4. We support the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people in housing, jobs, civil marriage and benefits,

child custody – and in all areas of life, the right to be treated equally with all other people.

5. We affirm the right to worship or not to worship as each one chooses.

6. We support affirmative action to remedy discrimination, to protect constitutional rights and to provide equal opportunity under the law.

7. The Green Party abhors punitive discrimination in any form, and thus condemns the practice of those law enforcement agencies in the country which are guilty of discriminatory “racial profiling,” stopping motorists, harassing individuals, or using unwarranted violence against suspects with no other justification than race or ethnic background.

8. We also favor strong measures to combat official racism in the forms of police brutality and racial profiling directed against people of color. We agree with groups such as Amnesty International, which has recently said that police brutality has reached epidemic levels in the United States and we call for effective monitoring of police agencies to eliminate police brutality and racial profiling.

9. We support effective enforcement of the “VOTING RIGHTS ACT,” including language access to voting.

10. We will resist 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.

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. WOMEN’S RIGHTS must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman’s right to be a full participant in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination or interference in the intensely personal choice about whether to have a child.

14. We support the EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT.

15. THE EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES COMMISSION (EEOC) 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 women receive equal pay for jobs of equal worth.

16. Consumers have the right to adequate enforcement of the federal and state CONSUMER PROTECTION LAWS. Health and safety is paramount and we oppose lax or inappropriate regulatory actions.

17. Consumers have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives and protect their interests beyond simply voting on election day. We support the creation of CONSUMER ADVOCACY AGENCIES (for example, along the model of the Illinois Citizen Utility Board) to protect the interests of consumers against the corporate lobbyists who have essentially (and too often successfully) argued against the rights of consumers before the regulatory agencies. We would require that legal monopolies and regulated industries (for example, electric, gas, water, and telephone utilities) set-up statewide CONSUMER ACTION GROUPS to act on behalf of and advocate for consumer interests.

18. We call for consumer legislation to outlaw the use of animals in cosmetics and household product testing; in tobacco and alcohol testing; and in weapons development or other military programs.

19. We call for reforms to better inform consumers about the products they are buying; and where and how they are made. We endorse “truth in advertising,” including the clear definition of words like “recycled” and “natural.”

20. We call for the restoration of consumers’ rights to file class actions suits against manufacturers of unsafe products and restrictions on secrecy agreements that act to prevent lawsuits by not revealing damaging information.

21. We support “whistleblower rights” laws.

22. We support a citizen’s right of access to justice. Our system of justice must be made convenient to rich and poor alike, guarding it against big business attempts to regulate and, in effect, control our civil justice/civil jury system.

23. Recently proposed bills that encroach on civil liberties, such as the Crime Bill of ’96 and the Terrorist Bill of ’97, as well as the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which circumvents the 4th Amendment and opens the door for CIA to spy domestically on U.S. citizens, are of special concern to the Green Party. The Bill of Rights must remain a fundamental touchstone in defense of our civil rights.

H. FREE SPEECH

As we look to the foundation of our freedoms, it should be remembered that the Constitution of the United States is not only “the supreme law of the land” but is also the original source of other laws. In Article I, the Constitution spells out the “legislative powers” that are vested in Congress, which ultimately affect the personal and business lives of us all. In the Bill of Rights, the Constitution sets forth the fundamental rights and freedoms of all people, rights and freedoms that cannot be denied or abridged by Congress, or by any other branch or level of government.

An informed electorate is critical to good government. The scope of the First Amendment is extensive and prohibits any law which would abridge the freedom of speech, or of the press, most clearly in reference to political matters. Our legal right to criticize government is essential to the effective working of democracy.

1. We support openness in government, not secrecy, and endorse the “FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT” (FOIA) as a way of guaranteeing access to government decision-making.
2. We recognize that access to information has profound consequences to our democracy, and we have concerns regarding the concentration of information in the hands of fewer and fewer corporations. The FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC) must promulgate telecommunications policies that ensure the First Amendment rights of viewers and listeners. New and existing technologies must provide outlets for scientific and cultural expression and enhance the electoral process. The “affordable access” and “universal access” provisions of the “Telecommunications Act of 1996” should be interpreted by the FCC for what they are – a clear mandate for the telecommunications industry to make advanced communications systems affordable and equitably available to all American schools and libraries.
3. As Greens, we support those who urge the public to “reclaim the public airwaves.” The privatization of the broadcast airwaves – one of our most important taxpayer assets – has caused serious deformations of our politics and culture. The basic problem is that private broadcasters control what the public owns. And in return for free licenses to use taxpayer property, broadcasters give us a steady stream of increasingly coarse, redundant, superficial programming and, of

course, exclusively decide who says what on our public airwaves.

4. The Green Party supports “community radio,” particularly those rulemaking petitions before the F.C.C., which allow for a new service of small, locally-owned FM stations.
5. The concentration of power that has characterized the telecommunications industry must be limited. A wide span of programming and information, genuine citizen access, diversity of views, respect for local community interests, news, public affairs and “QUALITY CHILDREN’S PROGRAMMING” – the FCC should closely monitor applications for license renewals to the public airwaves to ensure that these public interest criteria are met.
6. Although we see regular assaults on the freedoms of speech enshrined in our nation’s founding documents, we oppose censorship in the arts, media (including the World Wide Web and Internet), and press. We encourage individual and social responsibility by artists, creative media, writers – and all citizens.

I. NATIVE AMERICANS

Native American culture is worthy of protection and special respect. As Greens we feel a special affinity to the respect for community and the Earth that many Native peoples have at their roots.

1. We recognize both the SOVEREIGNTY of Native American tribal governments and the government’s trust obligation to Native American people.
2. The federal government must renew its obligation to deal in good faith with Native Americans; to 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.
3. We support efforts to broadly reform the BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS (BIA) to make this vast agency more responsible, and responsive, to tribal governments.
4. 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 peoples’ health and safety.

5. We support the complete clean-up of those mines and tailing piles that are a profoundly destructive legacy of the Cold War era.
6. We recognize that Native American land and treaty rights often stand at the front-line against government and multinational corporate attempts to plunder energy, mineral, timber, fish, and game resources, polluting water, air, and land in the service of the military, economic expansion, and the consumption of natural resources. Therefore, we support legal, political, and grassroots efforts by and on behalf of Native Americans to protect their traditions, rights, livelihoods, and their sacred spaces.

J. IMMIGRATION / EMIGRATION

Our nation was built with a rich tapestry of immigrants and we must continue to respect the potential contributions and RIGHTS of our new immigrants.

1. Preferential quotas based on race, class, and ideology should be abandoned for immigration policies that promote fairness, NON-DISCRIMINATION and family reunification.
2. We support policies that reflect our constitutional guarantees of freedoms of speech, association and travel.
3. We find particular attention should be given those minorities who are political exiles and refugees, including Russian Jews, mid-East Kurds, Tibetans and Haitians.
4. Our relationship with our neighbor to the south, Mexico, needs to be given added attention. Our border relations and reciprocal economic opportunities should be a central concern of government that is looking to improved economic, environmental and social conditions for both peoples.
5. We oppose those who seek to divide us for political gain by raising ethnic and racial hatreds, blaming immigrants for social and economic problems.

K. HOUSING

1. Decent, AFFORDABLE HOUSING for every American must be a component of a campaign at the federal, state and local level.
2. We hold that government should play an activist role in the availability of housing. A COORDINATED HOUSING PLAN that is broad and inclusive should devote resources to non-profit community housing projects,

private sector investments and appropriate public housing initiatives that encourage individual ownership over time.

3. We encourage low-density, low-impact, site-specific designs that encourage human-scale development and environmentally sensitive planning.

4. Pension funds and community development banks can be targeted and can become important sources of new funding. Subsidies, trade-offs with developers, and the creative use of city and county zoning ordinances should be emphasized to increase the affordable housing stock available within local communities depending on need.

L. NATIONAL SERVICE

1. We must create new opportunities for citizens to serve their communities. ALTERNATIVE SERVICE to the military should be encouraged.

2. We advocate the formation of a CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC) with national leadership, and state and local affiliates, to spearhead efforts to work on the tasks of environmental education, restoration of damaged habitats, reforestation, and cleaning up polluted waterways. Providing land and resource management skills will challenge young people while encouraging social responsibility.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

A. ENERGY POLICY

If we do not alter our energy use soon – and drastically – the ecological crisis may be exacerbated past a point where it can be resolved. A comprehensive energy policy must be a critical element of our environmental thinking. Investing in ENERGY EFFICIENCY and RENEWABLE ENERGY is key to sustainability.

Just as ecological materials management is governed by the concept of “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” (in priority order), ecological energy management must be governed by the principle of Conservation, Efficiency, and Clean Renewables. Of highest importance is to use less, then to use wisely, and to have clean production of what is used.

1. Extensive conservation measures will bring huge resource savings for both the economy and the environment.

Conservation, along with energy efficiency and renewables, is an essential part of an effective energy policy. The Greens call for pervasive efforts on the energy conservation front. We encourage the creation and design of human environments that are as energy-efficient as possible, recognizing that yet further conservation efforts are a significant means to meeting our future energy needs without further energy production. Similarly, we support the phasing out of the most ecologically harmful sources of energy.

2. We call for the development of STATE ENERGY POLICIES that include taxes and/or fines on energy “waste,” and the funding of energy research, including credits for alternative and sustainable energy use such as solar, wind, hydrogen and biomass.

3. Greens also support enacting mandatory carbon reduction measures and setting the bar for carbon emissions at a percentage well below the best appropriate technology.

4. In order to aid in the rapid replacement of extremely polluting energy systems (nuclear and coal-fired power plants), natural gas power plants could help provide needed replacement power until conservation, efficiency and truly clean renewables are fully phased in. Natural gas power plants should not be used to feed an increase in energy demand.

5. Thanks to technological innovation prompted by regrettably limited federal support, photovoltaic cells now cost one-tenth what they did 20 years ago, and wind-generated power costs one-fifth what it did 10 years ago. It is now estimated that the total RENEWABLE ENERGY contribution to our nation’s energy use could realistically be 10% by the year 2010 and 20% by the year 2020 – but only if increased emphasis is placed on renewable energy. We urge that new construction be required to achieve substantial portions of its heating energy from the sun in the next few years. Incentives/disincentives should be put in place to move utilities toward establishing SOLAR POWER STATIONS to augment and eventually supplant fossil-fuel generated electricity.

6. “TRUE-COST PRICING,” which reflects the “realistic” cost of products including ecological damage and externalities caused during the manufacturing process, must be adopted to achieve accurate financial accounting. Only with a shift in the way we are seeing, can we accurately assess our energy choices and costs – and the long-term impacts of the energy decisions we are making.

B. NUCLEAR ISSUES

1. The Green Party recognizes that there is no such thing as nuclear waste “disposal.” All 6 of the “low-level” nuclear waste dumps in the United States have leaked. There are no technological quick fixes which can effectively isolate nuclear waste from the biosphere for the duration of its hazardous life. Therefore, it is essential that generation of additional nuclear wastes be stopped.

2. The Green Party calls for the early retirement of nuclear power reactors as soon as possible (in no more than 5 years) and for a phase-out of other technologies that use or produce nuclear waste. These technologies include non-commercial nuclear reactors, reprocessing facilities, nuclear waste incinerators, food irradiators and all commercial and military uses of depleted uranium.

3. Current methods of underground storage are a danger to present and future generations. Any nuclear waste management strategies must be aboveground, continuously monitored, retrievable and repackable, and must minimize transportation of wastes.

4. The Green Party strongly opposes any shipment of high-level nuclear waste across the United States to the proposed Nevada waste “repository” at Yucca Mountain or any other centralized facility. The Green Party believes that this proposal is part of a move to re-fire a fast-track, commercial nuclear industry, if they can get their unsafe waste product “safely disposed of.”

5. We call for cancellation of the WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT (WIPP), the nation’s first weapons complex nuclear dump, in southern New Mexico.

6. We call for independent, public-access radiation monitoring at all nuclear facilities.

7. We support applicable environmental impact statements (EIS) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis with citizen participation at all nuclear sites.

8. We support an immediate and intensive CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC about nuclear problems, including disposal, clean-up and long-term dangers.

C. WASTE MANAGEMENT

1. Legal requirements and standards for businesses applying for zoning permits should be formulated to require disclosure of toxics which may be used.

2. Past violations, illegal use and misuse of hazardous materials have to be remedied appropriately. Those responsible for toxic waste dumping, spills, and contamination on or off their sites should be responsible for

costs of complete clean-up. In addition, we call for levying sizable fines on those found guilty of violating such standards.

3. We endorse a revisiting of “Superfund” legislation to make these clean up laws more effective.

4. Waste management is a critical challenge to the survival of the modern world. Real reductions in per capita consumption of materials, and significant increases in the efficiency with which materials are used, is a problem that must be faced sooner rather than later. We support RECYCLING at every level of the economy. We endorse SOURCE REDUCTION and municipal programs that particularly focus on household recycling.

5. We oppose INCINERATION of municipal solid waste, sewage, non-biological medical waste, and toxic waste. We support a moratorium on any new incinerators that burn such materials and a rapid shutdown of existing incinerators that do so.

6. We oppose shipping of toxic wastes across national borders, and the SHIPMENT OF TOXIC/HAZARDOUS OR RADIOACTIVE WASTES, without regulation, across any political borders.

7. We oppose the exportation, under any circumstances, of chemicals that are prohibited in the United States.

8. Environmental justice demands that poor communities, minority and under-represented communities not bear an unfair burden when it comes to disposal of toxic wastes.

9. The environmental problems associated with the personal computer and electronics industry are growing worse. The Green Party believes these environmental issues must be identified and addressed:

a.) Pollution. The manufacture of computer chips, computers and peripherals involves a host of chemicals that end up in our water, air, and landfills. Cleanup is a major cost, an “externality” that must be addressed. Health costs associated with the use of computers and electronic devices are not insignificant and range of work-related injuries and illnesses. At work, at home and on the road the digital era is ubiquitous. The shift mandated by the FCC from analog to digital communications systems (including HDTV), as just one example, will produce tens of millions of out-of-date televisions and monitors over the next decade. The chemicals in these devices are dangerous and should not be allowed to simply be deposited in landfills or disposed of in a way that will produce long-term health damaging and adverse environmental effects.

b.) Power. Energy bills associated with the electronics industry are rising and alternative sources of power are needed. Cleaner, cheaper ‘green’ energy has to become a universal goal.

c.) Paper consumption. The demand for printing paper puts pressure on dwindling forests. Clear cutting continues with all the attendant environmental damage. The pollution caused by mills is considerable, and the production of white paper is particularly damaging. Alternative paper stock, and recycled papers, should become the norm.

d.) Packaging. The excessive amounts of plastic, cardboard and Styrofoam many manufacturers use to package computers and software are an increasing problem. These non-biodegradable materials contribute layers to landfills. It’s time to have a complete makeover of the electronics packaging industry.

e.) Recycling. All the materials associated with the personal computer and electronics industry must be identified as recyclable and recycled wherever possible as part of a closed-loop system.

D. FOSSIL FUELS

1. We are aware of the environmental hazards that accompany the use of fossil fuels and of their non-sustainability and eventual depletion. We call for TRANSITION ENERGY STRATEGIES, including the use of relatively clean-burning natural gas, as a way to reorder our energy priorities and over-reliance on traditional fuels.

2. We call for a gradual phase-out of gasoline and other fossil fuels. Until gasoline driven cars can be replaced, we advocate FUEL EFFICIENCY standards, a “gas guzzler” tax on new low mileage vehicles, and a “gas sipper” rebate on high mileage vehicles.

3. We advocate fair “buybacks” of the most polluting and least efficient vehicles to remove these vehicles from the road.

4. We oppose further development of our nation’s outer continental shelf for oil drilling or exploration.

5. We acknowledge the relative benefits that can be achieved in the production of and use of NATURAL GAS in current economic alternatives and transition strategies.

6. Public ownership and/or strong public regulation of UTILITIES should be encouraged to advance energy efficient policies. Appropriate tax-exempt bonds should be authorized to finance public ownership in utilities. Tax-exempt bonds

should be authorized to allow publicly owned utilities to finance conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy projects.

E. RENEWABLE ENERGY

1. Overall, it is essential in the long-term that ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SYSTEMS be put in place that produce goods that are durable, repairable, reusable, recyclable, and energy-efficient, using both non-toxic materials and nonpolluting production methods.

2. We call on regulatory agencies to include “life-cycle” considerations in their standard-setting process for product approval. We promote citizen participation in this process.

3. Ultimately, environmentally destructive technologies, processes, and products should be replaced with alternatives that are environmentally benign.

Producers/manufacturers must look to redesigning their products. Legislation that will assist this transition (including bans, taxation, recycled content standards and economic incentives/disincentives such as taxation, special fees, and/or deposits) will be required in any concerted move toward system-wide sustainability.

F. TRANSPORTATION POLICY

1. We encourage providing a broad range of incentives for ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION, including natural gas vehicles, solar and electric vehicles, bicycles and bikeways, and MASS TRANSIT.

2. As a nation we must push for motor vehicle fuel efficiency, raising the standard to a minimum of 45 miles per gallon by 2005.

3. We must require that an increasing percentage of the Federal motor fleet is converted to natural gas and aims at being pollution free over the next decade.

4. We must expand our country’s network of rail lines, high speed regional passenger service, and urban light rail systems.

5. We support efforts to develop inexpensive, efficient solar cells, chips and panels via “industrial grade” silicon and other advanced materials.

6. We endorse converting our nation’s weapons complex and labs toward civilian RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. We are especially interested in public/private partnerships that work to create breakthrough battery technology which would enable electric cars (and all solar electric applications) to become energy efficient and market competitive.

G. CLEAN AIR / GREENHOUSE EFFECT / OZONE DEPLETION

Climate change presents very real economic and social opportunities for new and sustainable jobs from new energy technologies, including both energy efficiency and renewables. Yet, too often, the focus of debate has been only on the pain of adjustment to carbon reductions, this because of the influence of multinational business on government policies.

With only 4% of the earth's people, the United States produces more than 20% of emissions. From 1990 to 1996, total U.S. emissions grew by an amount equal to what Brazil and Indonesia produce every year. Per capita, the United States emits 85% more than Germany, twice as much as England and Japan, and currently nearly 10 times as much as China.

The Green Party urges the U.S. Congress to act immediately to address the critical global warming and climate change issues. When the U.S. Senate voted 95-0 to oppose any global warming treaty that does not also bind developing countries to specific, if smaller, emissions reductions in the future, which many industrializing countries oppose, it put a roadblock in the way of progress by all nations.

Greens believe the following are possible, if we are to make a start on protecting our global climate. It is imperative that we strive for no less:

1. An early target must still be set to prevent emissions rising so far that future reductions become even more difficult. There must be commitments for 2005.
2. Avoiding loopholes is now even more important than an ambitious target. Unless a very ambitious target is set, which now seems unlikely, allowing sinks and trading within the protocol will create such loopholes that no real reductions will occur. Trading and sinks must be left until there is much more scientific precision about how they are measured.
3. Nuclear power is not an acceptable alternative to fossil energy. We should not accept country commitments that depend on increasing nuclear capability. We must join the solar age.
4. Targets are not enough without credible policies and measures to achieve them. We urge all governments to table a list of the policies and measures they intend to adopt to attain their target, for example eco-taxes and energy performance standards.
5. The Green party endorse the "Contraction and Convergence" model under discussion at international talks, which as proposed would eventually give every human being

an equal right to the atmosphere, as the most practical way to achieve justice and participation for developing countries.

6. The strict, comprehensive protections of the "Clean Air Act" must be maintained and enhanced if we are to keep in place effective federal programs that deal with urban smog, toxic air pollution, acid rain and ozone depletion. State and local clean air initiatives should advance and improve national efforts. As an example, California has taken the lead in legislation moving forward stricter clean air and fuel efficiency standards, and vehicle and fleet conversions. These programs should serve as a model for other local, regional and state initiatives.

7. It is said that U.S. industries emit over 20% of greenhouse gases globally. As a nation, we must implement public and private initiatives at every level to support the "GLOBAL CLIMATE TREATY" signed at the "Earth Summit" in 1992, committing industrial nations within a time framework to reducing emissions to 1990 levels.

8. The Earth's atmosphere, according to informed scientific opinion, is in great danger due to man-made chemicals and hydrocarbon emissions. Chloro-fluorocarbons (CFCs), hydrochloro-fluorocarbons (HCFCs), and other related ozone-depleting substances should be banned as soon as is possible.

9. GREENHOUSE GASES and the threat of GLOBAL WARMING must be addressed by the international community in concert, through international treaties and conventions, with the industrial nations at the forefront of this vital effort.

H. LAND USE

Greens are advocates for the Earth. All the rivers, lakes, landscapes, forests, and wildlife. This is our birthright and our home - the green Earth.

When we see the first picture ever taken of our green oasis from space, photographed from the window of the Apollo flight, we marvel at the preciousness of life.

We remember John Muir's and Edward Abbey's call to protect what is critical to our spirit. Experiencing the wilderness calls us to preserve pristine nature. We are advocates for our home. Our advocacy is based on our love of nature and our recognition that it is beyond us.

Greens take a BIOREGIONAL VIEW of the ecosystem, acknowledging political boundaries while noting that the land, air and water, the interconnected biosphere, is a

unique and precious "community", deserving careful consideration and protection. Greens support restructuring institutions to conform to bioregional realities. We feel that, just as the planetary ecology consists of nested systems at various scales, so must our programs and institutions of ecological stewardship be scaled appropriately.

Guided by our sense of stewardship, we feel that all land use policies, plans, and practices should be based on sustainable development and production, the reduce-reuse-recycle ethic, and the encouragement of balance between optimum and diverse use of land.

1. Land Ownership and Property Rights

We encourage the social ownership and use of land at the community, local, and regional level, for example in the form of community and conservation land trusts, under covenants of ecological responsibility.)

2. Communities and Urbanism

Greens find inspiration in building healthy, livable communities. Communities must be designed or redesigned so that they are built with energy efficiency in mind, on a human scale, with integrated land uses. Such integrated land uses should provide, for example, ready access between home and work, and to schools, a local supply of food, shopping, worship, medical care, recreation and natural areas. Integrated land use should also de-emphasize individual motorized transport and place more emphasis on ecologically responsible mass transit, bicycling, and the pedestrian.

We promote urban design and architecture that does not alienate, but fulfills, the spirit and that is compatible with human, social, artistic, and environmental values. Greens support the concepts advanced by the NEW URBANISM movement. As there is much to learn about human-scale development and neighborly social interaction from historical patterns of urbanism, we support historic preservation.

Recreational opportunities are the beginning of lifelong appreciation of our natural environment. We should all have opportunities to experience nature firsthand.

3. Land Use Planning

It is imperative that we as a nation find a means to CONTROL URBAN SPRAWL. The ecological, social, and fiscal crises engendered by sprawl are becoming ever-more apparent. Greens enthusiastically endorse the Metropolitix movement, which seeks to control sprawl by integrating such measures as urban growth boundaries, tax base sharing, fair housing, and metropolitan

transportation. Urban areas can be revitalized through “brownfields” redevelopment although standards for the clean up of contaminated sites must not be lowered. Rural areas and farmland should be preserved, through such measures as purchase of development rights.

WATERSHED PLANNING should be undertaken to mitigate the impacts of urban development on our streams, rivers, and lakes. Storm water management, soil erosion and sedimentation control, the establishment of vegetative buffers, and performance standards for development are appropriate measures in this area. Special attention must be given to the restoration and protection of riparian areas, which are critical habitats in healthy ecosystems.

4. Natural Resource Management

Greens believe that effective land and resource management practices must be founded on stewardship, such as incorporated in a “land ethic” as articulated by Aldo Leopold.

a.) Stringent natural resource management should serve to prevent activities that adversely affect public and adjacent lands. We call for repeal of the “Mining Act of 1872.” We demand a halt to federal mineral, oil and gas, and resource giveaways, “royalty holidays,” and flagrant concessions to the mining, energy and timber industries; and an immediate crackdown on their evasions and fraudulent reporting.

b.) We call for strict CLEAN-UP ENFORCEMENT of industrial-scale natural resource extraction activities, for example, of tailings, pits and run-off from mining operations via agreement with companies that can include posting of site-restoration bonds prior to commencement of operations. The regional long-term environmental and social impacts of any resource extractions should be minimized, and the land restored to a healthy ecological state.

c.) We call for a halt to all current international funding policies that promote destruction of forest ecosystems and we call for an end to the trade in endangered hardwoods. We support laws that promote paper recycling and mandate SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY practices that promote biodiversity.

d.) We urge protection of “old growth” forests, a zero-cut policy banning industrial timber harvest on federal and state lands, a ban on all clear-cutting, and a reduction of road building on public lands.

e.) We advocate raising grazing fees on public land to approximate fair market value and significant grazing reforms. We support

policies that favor small-scale ranchers over corporate operations (which are often used as tax write-offs, a practice which undermines family ranches).

f.) We must promote the preservation and extension of wildlife habitat and biological diversity by creating and preserving large continuous tracts of open space (complete ecosystems so as to permit healthy, self-managing wildlife populations to exist in a natural state. We oppose any selling off of our National Parks, the commercial “privatizing” of public lands; and/or cutbacks or exploitation in our national wilderness areas.

g.) Public involvement in decision making via active and well-funded RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS and COUNCILS will aid a long-term process on the use of federal and state trust lands which are currently controlled by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Forest Service, National Park Service, and State Land Offices.

h.) We support banning indiscriminate wildlife “damage control practices” and abolishing the ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL agency that has been renamed “Wildlife Services.”

i.) We urge comprehensive baseline mapping of our nation’s biodiversity resources.

I. WATER

Together we must look ahead and plan for future water uses, as well as today’s needs. Who can disagree that clean and sufficient water resources will determine what kind of future we have?

1. With the longer term in mind, we call for elimination of wasteful subsidies on the use of water in agriculture and for municipal water rates to be set high enough, or that other INCENTIVES/DISINCENTIVES be set in place, to discourage the wasteful use of water.

2. We support the federal “Clean Water Act” setting strict requirements for sewage discharges, wetland protection and water quality standards. Recent moves to rollback protections would in effect create a dirty water act. Our right to clean water is non-negotiable.

3. Given the profound importance of clean water, we support the establishment of federal, state, and local GROUNDWATER PROTECTION agencies with authority to establish standards for the use of water; to provide tough and timely enforcement of laws enacted; and to protect our aquifers

from overuse, depletion and contamination.

4. We endorse alternative solutions to water treatment and clean-up, for example CONSTRUCTED WETLANDS and biological remediation.

5. We acknowledge Native American rights regarding water, and urge fair and equitable solutions with tribes on the part of the courts and State Water Engineers.

J. AGRICULTURE

The human species is at the top of the food chain and is, therefore, very vulnerable to the degrading of the environment and the loss of species. If for no other reason than our own preservation, we should work to protect our environment and the diversity of our region’s and planet’s rich life forms.

Factory farming (“industrial farming”) threatens to further erode the family farms and the general quality of life in our rural areas. Family farms are the basis of community-based economics and essential to rural development and a healthy, diverse economy.

The consequences of factory farming are devastating. Open pits of putrefying animal wastes are allowed to discharge into rivers and streams, degrading water and air quality, killing aquatic life and posing serious threats to human health and the environment.

Corporate industrial farming practices are inhumane and cause unnecessary suffering to animals. Industrial farming has changed the type of food we eat, and studies are now demonstrating that nutritional value has been decreased, with resultant immune system impacts.

The story of industrial farming needs to be told. The Green Party strongly opposes the rampant and damaging policies of corporate industrial farming and calls for a national shift away from these practices.

The Green Party opposes the “biodevastation” that Monsanto and related “biotech” companies are engaged in. The actions of Monsanto in trying to subvert labeling of RBGH need to be exposed. Monsanto and other biotech companies need to be brought into the light and their actions made public. For example, over half the soybean production in the United States (for example, “Roundup Ready soya”) is the result of genetically modified seeds. Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are the new stealth product of the U.S. transnational corporations.

The acquiescence of the U.S. government to biotech-friendly capitalism, despite the loud protests of governments and peoples around the world, is a scandal.

It is unacceptable that consumers purchasing soy products, for example, do not know whether they are eating or drinking genetically modified organisms. If a fish gene has been transferred to a crop to make it more tolerant of cold, consumers should know that they're ingesting a genetically modified food organism. If a gene has been added to seed stock to make that crop more capable of being heavily doused with pesticides like "RoundUp," consumers should be warned.

Genetically modified "Terminator" seeds that are more about "intellectual property rights" and corporate profit than they are about sustainable agricultural practices, Third-world economic independence, and health, should be banned. Labeling should fully disclose where genetically engineered (and/or irradiated) food is being supplied. Consumer choice needs to be based on full and complete disclosure. Whether it is Bt corn, genetically modified maize, or GM oilseed that finds its way into a menu of other products, the consumer needs to know and choose.

Ralph Nader has called for consumer revolts. The time has come. The Green Parties and the Green Platforms around the world are united in opposition to genetically engineered "vat food" that is being shoved down our throats. The arrogance of U.S. biotech firms needs to be shown for what it is – food production for profit, not health. Food will be a key part of the next millenium's struggle for democracy. The Green Party stands in opposition to a gen-food future as delivered by unaccountable mega-transnational corporations.

1. We call for the establishment of an ecologically based sustainable agricultural system that moves as rapidly as possible towards regional/bioregional self reliance.
2. An adequate FOOD SUPPLY is tied to many of our nation's domestic, export, foreign aid, geopolitical and related overseas goals. We support anti-hunger and "Food Stamp" programs at home, and support assistance to foreign countries and their people that moves them toward SELF-SUFFICIENCY and sustainability in food production.
3. WORLD HUNGER can be best addressed by FOOD SUPPLY INDEPENDENCE. Population growth and accompanying deprivation, which has led to increased poverty and environmental destruction in the Third World, can be replaced by a decent standard of living, and sustainable populations and growth. Goals

and policies that aim at sustainable production to end hunger while preserving the environment are crucial for success of these efforts. Food security is a base-line necessity.

4. We call for phasing out the use of man-made pesticides and artificial fertilizers, and funding for research to find acceptable alternatives.
5. We support "Integrated Pest Management" techniques, as an alternative to current chemical-based agriculture.
6. We support the adoption of "organic certification standards" and support regional efforts to broaden this effort by reaching out to and identifying growers and buyers of organic produce.
7. We call for a reconsideration of the potentially far-reaching and unforeseen effects of seed and plant hybridization and especially of genetic engineering in agricultural systems. We are particularly concerned about loss of and increasing threat posed to plant diversity, which must be saved, maintained and enhanced if we are to have an authentic ALTERNATIVE GREEN REVOLUTION, based on diversity, sustainable agriculture and local self-empowerment.
8. We generally oppose the patenting of life forms, including gene-splicing techniques, and call for a moratorium on agricultural genetic engineering while an evaluation of its effects on ecological and social sustainability is carried out. The implications of a corporate takeover, and resulting monopolization of genetic "intellectual property" by the bioengineering industry, are immense. With the introduction of the world's first genetically engineered (and duly patented) tomato, we need to re-examine our government's oversight of this untested, unproven field.
9. We advocate REGIONALIZING our food system and decentralizing agricultural lands, production, and distribution.
10. We support research, within the public and private arenas, including educational institutions, for sustainable, organic, and ecologically balanced agriculture.
11. The Green Party supports the strongest "organic" standards. California has had the highest standards of any state for organic foods labeling. These standards were authored by those in the industry, growers, manufacturers and those in the business of livestock raising and feed production. Proposed USDA standards should be based on the highest standards.

Currently, organic food is priced such that it is beyond the means of low-income consumers. Rather than allow for a system

whereby only the wealthier in society get to eat safer and healthier foods, there must be remedies in place to protect all consumers. First, the use of sewage sludge or hazardous wastes as fertilizer, the use of food irradiation and the use of genetic engineering must be banned in ALL food production. Other aspects addressed in organic standards, such as the use of intensive animal confinement and the use of persistent, toxic pesticides must be phased out as well for all food production. Until these take place, there should be an end to government price supports, which aid in non-organic food production and government subsidies should be shifted such that the cost of organic food products is

K. BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Ecological systems are diverse and interlocking, and nature's survival strategy can best be found in the adaptability that comes as a result of biological diversity. Although many people may think first of tropical rainforests in reference to the richness of (and threat to) biological diversity, we believe diversity close to home is worthy of saving, as are the myriad species within the rainforest and its teeming canopy.

1. The Green Party supports a strong, enforceable "ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT" based on the principles of conservation biology.
2. We look to the "CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY," first adopted at the "Earth Summit" in 1992, as a primary statement of purpose regarding how we can act to preserve and sustain our common genetic resources. Greens emphasize conservation of "natural" populations and ecosystems, and we seriously question the demands of the US to amend this unprecedented international agreement on behalf of the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries, with their insistence upon protection of their "intellectual property" and technology transfer rights. Within these demands are inconsistencies which can threaten the Convention's overall goals.
3. We encourage support of and public access to seed banks and seed collections that emphasize "DEEP DIVERSITY," particularly through traditional and heirloom seeds.
4. We call for wide-spread education on the critical importance of efforts being made (including "backyard biodiversity" gardening) to replant indigenous plant life where it has dwindled or been lost.

5. Corporate agribusiness is founded on F-1 hybrid seeds, proprietary products that cannot be saved season-to-season and have to be bought from the company store at each new planting. We discourage monopolistic production of high-tech hybrid seeds, the basis of the evolving industry of “MONOCULTURE” agriculture – i.e., agribusiness which relies on NON-SUSTAINABLE METHODS (single crop varieties bred with industrial traits and grown with high energy, chemical and pesticide inputs).

6. We know that agriculture and food comprise the world’s largest economic market. We find it of great concern that the practices of corporate agribusiness are leading, as scientists are beginning to point out, to diminishing yields; increasing petrochemical fertilizer and pesticide costs; serious topsoil loss; non-point, runoff pollution of waterways and aquifers; and the return of resistant pests and blights requiring ever-larger doses of environmentally harmful pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, and/or miticides.

7. Monocultures have also led to a massive loss of biodiversity as they have displaced traditional varieties and seed stocks. We encourage the use of diverse natural varieties, those passed down over many generations, called “open-pollinates” because they can be grown out, the best plants’ seeds being saved season to season. In practice, we support this as the basis of an “Alternative Green Revolution,” sustainable agriculture that is closely connected to the environment, and not dependent on outside companies and their industrial monopolies.

8. We oppose in principle international trade agreements (NAFTA, GATT and the WTO in particular) which have precedent-setting provisions protecting transnational, corporate control of the “INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY” of genetic material, hybrid seeds and proprietary products.

9. Greens call for a move away from corporate control of agriculture (and the resultant extinction of traditional plant varieties) and instead envision a healthy and sustainable food system, based on crop diversity, community empowerment, self-sufficiency, cooperative marketing, recycling, seed saving, local (and fresh) production, and organic methods.

10. The struggle over the production and quality of our food supply is critical and has yet to be determined. The outcome of this struggle will have an intimate connection to our personal health and the future biological diversity of our environment. We believe strongly that we must work to bring this

message every community throughout the world.

11. Cloning is a challenge to basic Green philosophy. Since the efforts to clone animals, and eventually, humans, has been undertaken by profit-making corporations, the purpose behind such projects is to manufacture commodities. To classify a human (or any part thereof, including human DNA or body organ) as a commodity) is to turn human beings into property.

12. Finally, as Greens, we must add that the mark of a humane and civilized society truly lies in how we treat the least protected among us. To extend rights to other sentient, living beings is our responsibility and a mark of our place among all of creation. We find cruelty to animals to be repugnant and criminal. We call for an intelligent, compassionate approach to the treatment of animals.

IV. ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

A. ECO-NOMICS

We can learn from indigenous people who believe that the earth and its natural systems are to be respected and cared for in accordance with ecological principles. Concepts of ownership should be employed in the context of stewardship, and social and ecological responsibility. We support environmental and social responsibility in all businesses, whether privately or publicly owned.

To create an enduring society, we must devise a system of production and commerce where every act is sustainable and restorative. We believe that all business has a social contract with society and the environment (in effect a “fiduciary responsibility”), and that “socially responsible business” and “shareholder democracy” can be models of prospering, successful business.

1. We call for an economic system that is based on a combination of private businesses, decentralized democratic cooperatives, publicly owned enterprises, and alternative economic structures, all of which put human and ecological needs alongside profits to measure success, and are accountable to the communities in which they function.

2. Community-based economics constitutes an alternative to both corporate capitalism and state socialism. It is very much in keeping with the Greens’ valuation of

diversity and decentralization.

Recognition of limits is central to a Green economic orientation. The drive to accumulate power and wealth must become recognized for what it is, a pernicious characteristic of a civilization headed, ever more rapidly, in a pathological direction. Greens advocate that economic relations become more direct, more cooperative, and more egalitarian.

Humanizing economic relations is just one aspect of our broader objective: to consciously and deliberately (albeit gradually) shift toward a different way of life – characterized by sustainability, regionalization, a more harmonious balance between the natural ecosphere and the human-made technosphere, and a revival of community life.

Our communitarian perspective is antithetical to both Big Business and Big Government. It distinguishes the Greens and will enable us to make a unique contribution toward deriving political and economic solutions for the 21st century. 3. Greens support a major redesign of commerce. We endorse “true-cost pricing.” We support production that eliminates waste. In natural systems, everything is a meal for something else. Everything recycles, there is no “waste.” We need to mimic natural systems in the way we manufacture and produce things.

“Consumables” need to be designed to be thrown into a compost heap and/or eaten, for example. “Durable goods” would be designed in closed-loop systems, ultimately to be disassembled and reassembled. “Toxics” would be safeguarded and could have “markers” identifying them as belonging, in perpetuity, to their makers.

4. We need to remake commerce to encourage diversity and variety, responding to the enormous complexity of global and local conditions. Big business is not about appropriateness and adaptability, but about power and market control. Greens support small business, responsible “stakeholder capitalism,” and broad and diverse forms of economic cooperation. We argue that economic diversity is more responsive than big business to the needs of diverse human populations. Sustaining our quality of life, eco-nomic prosperity, environmental health, and long-term survival demands that we adopt new ways of doing business.

5. Greens support a definition of sustainability where we openly examine the economy as a part of the ecosystem, not as an isolated subset in which nothing but “resources” come in and products and waste go out and never the economy and the real world shall meet.

B. RE-ASSERTING LOCAL CITIZEN CONTROL OVER CORPORATIONS

Currently, corporations possess more rights and freedoms than natural human persons. Through a series of judicial rulings, and by virtue of their ability to control governments and economies by virtue of wealth, corporations have judicially rewritten our Constitution and have emerged as unaccountable, unelected governments. The Greens, therefore, support all reforms that seek to supplant governmental regulation of corporations with communities that seek to define corporations. In the interim, Greens support measures that hold executives and officers of corporations directly liable for harm that results from their decisions.

When we look at the HISTORY OF our states, we learn that citizens intentionally defined CORPORATIONS through charters – the certificates of incorporation. In exchange for the charter, a corporation was obligated to obey all laws, to serve the common good, and to cause no harm. Early state legislators wrote charter laws to limit corporate authority, and to ensure that when a corporation caused harm, they could revoke its charter.

In the late 19th century, however, corporations claimed special protections under the Constitution. Large companies used legal power to assert legal authority over what to make and how to make it, to move money, influence elections, bend governments to their will. They insisted that once formed, corporations may operate forever, with the privilege of limited liability and freedom from community or worker interference in business judgments.

It is inappropriate for investment and production decisions that can shape our communities and lives to be made essentially from afar, in boardrooms, closed-door regulatory agencies, and prohibitively expensive courtrooms.

It is unacceptable to have the level of influence now being exerted by corporate interests over the public interest. We challenge the propriety and equity of “corporate welfare” in the form of tax breaks, subsidies, payments, grants, bailouts, giveaways, unenforced laws and regulations; and historic, continuing access to our vast public resources, including millions of acres of land, forests, mineral resources, intellectual property rights, and government-created research.

We call for revisiting what one Supreme Court Justice called, when referring to the history of constitutional law, “the history of the impact of the modern corporation upon the American scene.” We

believe that corporations are neither inevitable nor always appropriate. Judicial and legislative decisions that have made it possible for big business to stay beyond the reach of democracy need to be re-examined.

Legal doctrines must be continually revised in recognition of the changing needs of an active, democratic citizenry. Huge multi-national corporations are artificial creations, not natural persons uniquely sheltered under constitutional protections. It is time to support local government and state government attempts to DEFINE CORPORATIONS and to prevent these entities from exercising democratic rights which are uniquely possessed by the citizens of the United States.

One point remains unequivocal: Because corporations have become the dominant economic institution of the planet, they must address and squarely face the social and environmental problems that afflict humankind.

C. LIVABLE INCOME

1. We affirm the importance of access to a livable income.
2. Job banks and other innovative training and employment programs which bring together the private and public sectors must become federal, state and local priorities. People who are unable to find decent work in the private sector should have options through publicly funded opportunities.
3. Workforce development programs must aim at moving people out of poverty – a “living wage” campaign and “living wage” standard will go a long way toward achieving this goal.
4. We urge that a national debate be held and broad public mandate be sought regarding (fiscal and monetary) economic strategies and policies as they impact wages. This debate is long overdue. The growing inequities in income and wealth between rich and poor; unprecedented discrepancies in salary and benefits between corporate top executives and line workers; loss of the “American dream” by the young and middle-class – each is a symptom of decisions made by policy-makers far removed from the concerns of ordinary workers trying to keep up.
5. A clear living wage standard should serve as a foundation for trade between nations, and a “floor” of wage protections and worker’s rights should be negotiated and set in place in future trade agreements. The United States should take the lead on this front – and not allow destructive, corporate predatory practices under the guise of “free” international trade.

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Reforms to allow communities to have influence in their ECONOMIC FUTURE should be implemented, including:

1. Locally owned small businesses, which are more accessible to community concerns.
2. Local production and consumption where possible.
3. Consumer co-ops, credit unions, incubators, microloan funds, local “currencies,” and other institutions that help communities develop economic projects.
4. Allowing municipalities to approve or disapprove large economic projects case-by-case based on environmental impacts, local ownership, community reinvestment, wage levels, and working conditions.
5. Allowing communities to set environmental, human rights, health and safety standards higher than federal or state minimums.
6. We support a national program of INVESTING IN THE COMMONS; to rebuild the infrastructure of communities; to repair and improve transportation lines between cities; and to protect and restore the environment. A federal capital budget should be put in place and applied in a process that assesses federal spending as capital investment.
7. We endorse DIRECT DEMOCRACY through TOWN MEETINGS, which express a community’s wishes on economic decision-making directly to local institutions and organizations.

E. SMALL BUSINESS AND JOB CREATION

1. Greens support an economic program that combats concentration and abuse of economic power. We support many different initiatives for forming successful, small enterprises that together can become an engine (and sustainable model) of job creation, prosperity and progress. Small business is where the jobs are. Over the past decade and a half, all new net job growth has come from the small business sector.
2. The Green economic model is about true prosperity – “Green means prosperity.” Our goal is to go beyond the dedicated good work being done by many companies (which is often referred to as “SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS” or “VALUE-DRIVEN BUSINESS”) and to present new ways of seeing how business can help create a sustainable world, all the while surviving in a competitive business climate.
3. We believe that conservation should be “profitable” and employment should be creative, meaningful and fairly compensated.

4. ACCESS TO CAPITAL is often an essential need in “growing” a business. There should be a comprehensive set of approaches to making loans available to small business at rates competitive to those offered big business. Financial institutions unfairly favor large corporations and the wealthy when determining how to “work” their loan portfolios. Government needs to reform current lending practices. We support “disclosure laws,” “anti-redlining laws” and a general openness on the part of the private sector as to what criteria are used in making lending decisions.

5. As lending institutions have obligations to the health of their local communities, we oppose arbitrary, or discriminatory practices which act to deny small business access to credit and expansion capital. We oppose “disinvestment” practices, in which lending and financial institutions move money deposited in local communities out of those same communities, in effect often damaging the best interests of their customers and community.

6. The present TAX SYSTEM acts to discourage small business, as it encourages waste, discourages conservation, and rewards consumption. Big business has used insider access to dominate the federal tax code. The tax system needs a major OVERHAUL, to get it up and running in a way that favors the legitimate and critical needs of the small business community.

RETENTION OF CAPITAL, through retained earnings, efficiencies, and savings, is central to small business remaining competitive. Current tax policies often act to unfairly penalize small business.

7. Government should reduce wherever possible unnecessary restrictions, fees, and “red tape.” In particular, the “Paper Simplification Act” should be seen as a way to benefit small business and it should be improved in response to the needs of small businesses.

8. We support the full deductibility of health insurance premiums paid by the self-employed.

9. Overall we believe that Federal and State government must pay more attention to putting forward policies that work on behalf of small business, and break their cycle of excessive welfare for big business.

10. State and local government should encourage where appropriate businesses that especially benefit the community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES should include citizen and community input. The type and size of businesses provided incentives (tax, loans, bonds, etc.) should be the result of local community participation.

11. Pension funds, the result of workers’ investments, should be examined as additional sources of capital for small business. Definitions of “fiscally prudent” need to be broadened within acceptable margins of safety to include investments beyond the current practices (and a credit rating system) almost exclusively benefiting large corporations. Investment managers need to be given discretionary powers to channel these monies, now in the trillions of dollars, into productive small and mid-sized businesses at the local level.

12. Insurance costs need to be brought down by means of active engagement with the insurance industry. Insurance pools, for example, of the kind offered businesses in the association, “Business for Social Responsibility,” need to be expanded.

13. “One-stop” offices should be set-up by government to assist individuals who want to change careers, or go into business for the first time.

14. HOME-BASED BUSINESSES and NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED BUSINESSES need to be assisted by forward-looking planning, not hurt by out-of-date zoning ordinances. “Telecommuting” and “home offices” should be aided, not hindered, by government.

F. TRADE

1. We reject trade agreements negotiated in secret and unduly influenced by corporate attorneys and representatives. In particular, we oppose the NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (NAFTA), the GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE (GATT), and its progeny, the WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO). They threaten the constitutional power of Congress and local sovereignty, and they effectively limit the participation of citizens in decisions. Instead, they create administrative bureaucracies which will be run by corporate interests unaccountable to public input or even legal challenge.

2. We demand that these agreements be updated to include more specific environmental, worker, health and safety standards in the text itself, not as “side agreements,” and full funding of existing environmental/health commitments (for example, the North American Development Bank and Border Environmental Cooperation Commission).

3. We reject any agreement which threatens the authority of states and local communities to establish more stringent health, safety and environmental standards.

4. We reject agreements that negotiate downward our basic environmental, health,

safety and labor standards, including the right to bargain collectively, a reasonable minimum wage, prohibitions against child and forced labor, and which threaten and violate human rights generally. The historic role of the United States has been to raise living standards, not to be dragged down by the lowest common denominator abroad.

5. The Tobin tax, named for the economist who first proposed it, calls for a small sales tax on cross border currency transactions. The purpose is to suppress market volume and volatility and help restore national sovereignty over monetary policy. In view of the growing disparity between the rich and poor in the United States and the world, and in light of the negative impacts of monetary speculation in the “Asian crisis” of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Russia, as well as similar crises in Brazil, Mexico and many other countries in the late ’90s, the Green Party urges that state and international governments work together to impose an effective form of Tobin tax.

In the last ten years, international moneychanging has grown in volume from \$200 billion to \$1.8 trillion daily with dangerous consequences for countries caught in a speculative riptide. Even a small tax of .01% to .05% would cool the speculative fever and raise between \$75 billion and \$250 billion annually. While reining in grievous financial abuses, the Tobin tax receipts could be devoted to reducing world poverty, funding international peacekeeping, and attacking environmental problems.

G. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Economic development in rural areas spans many agencies of government, but eventually comes back to prospering, healthy farms and ranch lands. Recreation, local business, schools and education, health care and energy availability – all are necessary to support diversified, successful rural economies.

1. RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY should begin with the local people. FAMILY FARMS are the backbone of a sustainable rural economy. They are more likely than corporate agribusiness to follow ecological practices that enrich the land; to use labor-intensive rather than energy-intensive farming methods; and to support agricultural biodiversity. Because of their smaller scale and production methods, they are more likely to produce food products that are healthier for consumers. Federal, state and local governments should provide financial assistance to small farmers to help them compete against agribusiness.

2. Price-fixing and anti-competitive actions of the corporate agricultural giants must be confronted aggressively.
3. Programs must be implemented by the federal and state government that add value to the production from family farms to help them remain competitive.
4. Government should encourage BANK POLICIES that spread their loan portfolios beyond corporate agriculture and ranching, and the big, subsidized grazing permit holders, in order to diversify local economies.
5. We support COOPERATIVE VENTURES to broaden markets of local producers.
6. We encourage state-assisted PRODUCT MARKETING EFFORTS and RURAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS.

H. BANKING FOR PEOPLE

1. We support a broad program of reform in the banking and savings and loan industry that acts to ensure that their “COMMONWEALTH” OBLIGATIONS to serve all communities are met. We understand that the present system is skewed to service first and foremost large businesses, transnational corporations and wealthy individuals. Since lending institutions are chartered by the state to serve the best interests of communities, the privileges that come with being given power at the center of commerce carry special responsibilities.
2. The government should take serious steps to ensure that low- and moderate-income persons and communities, as well as small business, have access to banking services, affordable loans and small-business supporting capital.
3. We support the extension of the “COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT” and its key performance data provisions to provide public and timely information on the extent of housing loans, small business loans, loans to minority-owned enterprises, investments in community development projects and affordable housing.
4. We believe Congress should act to charter COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BANKS, which would be capitalized with public funds and work to meet the credit needs of local communities.

I. INSURANCE REFORM

1. We endorse wide ranging INSURANCE INDUSTRY REGULATION to reduce the cost of insurance by reducing its special-interest protections; collusion and overpricing; and excessive industry-wide practices that too often injure the interests

of the insured when they’re most vulnerable and in need.

2. We call for actions at the federal and state level to rein in “bad faith” insurance actions – including the standard practice of attempting legal avoidance of obligations, and the current widespread practice of price fixing.
3. We support federal law that acts to make policies “transportable” from job to job and seeks to prevent insurance companies’ rejection of applicants for “prior conditions.” This is a move in the right direction but in no way addresses the scope of the problem, whether in health insurance, life insurance, business, liability, auto or crop insurance.
4. We support initiatives in secondary insurance markets that work to expand credit – for economic development in inner cities; affordable housing and home ownership among the poor; “transitional” farming to sustainable agriculture; and for rural development maintaining family farms.

J. PENSION REFORM

1. Working people, who own over \$3 trillion in pension monies (deferred wages in effect), should have financial options for where their money is invested apart from the current near-monopoly exerted by a handful of managers, banks, insurance companies, and mutual funds. We do not believe the overuse of pension funds for corporate mergers, acquisitions and leveraged buyouts is appropriate or productive. Yet, the current system has allowed vast amounts of American workers’ hard-earned money to be squandered on job-ending, plant-moving, corporate downsizing. The irony of investing pension funds in corporate decisions that undercut workers rights, employment, and retirement while hugely rewarding non-productive speculation should no longer be ignored.
2. PENSION FUNDS are gigantic capital pools that can, with government support, be used to meet community needs and benefit workers and their families directly.
3. Corporate-sponsored pension funds (the biggest category of funds) should be jointly controlled by management and workers, not exclusively ruled by management.
4. Federal law must be changed so that pension funds need simply seek a reasonable rate of return, not the prevailing market rate, which greatly restricts where investments can be made.
5. A secondary pension market set up by the government to insure pension investments

made in socially beneficial programs needs to be considered as one method that could greatly expand the impact of this capital market, as has been demonstrated in the case of federally insured/subsidized mortgage lending.

6. Prudent pension fund investing can and should be made on behalf of those whose best interests are served by having their money both make money and do good work. Creating jobs and supporting employment programs in public/private partnerships can become a priority as we seek to expand opportunities “where the jobs are” (toward small business, not transnational business). Why not look to targeting the under- and un-employed? We believe there are myriad opportunities for a profound shift to occur in how the capital of America’s workers is best put to use.

K. ANTI-TRUST ENFORCEMENT

1. We support strong and effectively enforced ANTI-TRUST REGULATION to counteract the concentration of economic power that carries a severe toll on the economy. The anti-trust division of the Justice Department has had its scope and powers reduced over the past decade. Media mergers concentrating power in the hands of media giants have been ineffectively challenged. An explosion of unregulated mergers and acquisitions, spin-offs and leveraged buy-outs has overwhelmed the federal government’s capacity to provide effective oversight. Financial and trading markets have become particularly vulnerable to “insider trading.” Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) regulation of these markets has seriously fallen short. Overall, what we see in unchecked market power is corruption, self-serving abuse of the democratic, political process, price gouging, loss of productivity and jobs, reduced competitiveness, and an array of predatory market practices that history has documented in detail about monopolies at work.
2. Although the pressure on Congress from the trans- and multi-national corporations is fierce when it involves effective oversight and accountability, we call for the federal government to step up and enforce the existing anti-trust laws and regulations – and tighten the laws as necessary.
3. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) must vigorously oversee mergers where the combined sales of the companies exceed \$1 billion.
4. The Justice Department must redefine its definition of “relevant market share” in assessing mergers.

5. The Congress must enact its calls for “competitiveness” by stopping illegal monopolistic practices.
6. We oppose the largesse of government in the form of massive corporate entitlements.

L. ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AND DEFENSE CONVERSION

The conversion of defense-related technologies to a peacetime technology-based economy is a major challenge. We must ask ourselves what we are to make of our nation’s defense-related industrial base in the face of the collapse of the Soviet threat to our vital interests and resultant need for a winding down of “national security” spending.

1. CONSOLIDATION of the nuclear weapons complex should move toward alternative civilian technologies and non-proliferation work, not toward a new generation of nuclear weapon design and production.
2. The Green Party, recognizing the need for de-escalating the arms race which continues unabated in spite of the end of the ‘Cold War’, strongly opposes putting nuclear weapons, lasers and other weapons in space in a new militarization policy that is in clear violation of international law.
3. We generally support defense TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER efforts, particularly new INDUSTRIAL APPLICATIONS and developments in the areas of advanced communications, alternative energy, and waste management.
4. Let us go forward with government and civilian space programs; RESEARCH INITIATIVES in transportation, advanced products and manufacturing; industrial applications, appropriate technologies and technology transfer; environmental sampling and monitoring; systems testing; laser communications; high speed computers; genetic mapping (with “Genome” project results in the public domain).
5. Let us devote a larger percentage of our nation’s research and development budget, both private and public, toward civilian use and away from military use. Let us become more competitive in developing consumer products and addressing our chronic trade imbalance in this fashion – not by increasing exports of military weapons and technologies.
6. Advanced telecommunications technologies (many of which came originally from defense applications) such as fiber optics, broadband infrastructure, the Internet and the World Wide Web hold great promise for education, decentralized

economies, and local control of decision-making. We believe we must move toward decentralization in these efforts – carefully protecting our individual rights as we go forward.

Advanced and high definition TV, digital communications, and wireless communications hold promise and challenge. For example, the public airwaves that will accommodate the new generation of telecommunications technology should not be free giveaways to media giants. An auction and built in requirements that attach to these licenses to act “in the public interest” is needed. Technology provides a tool – we must use these tools appropriately and ethically.

Myriad opportunities for technical excellence and continued economic achievement, apart from strategic, tactical and defense-related weapons systems, are in front of us. We urge Congress, all of government, and a forward-looking private sector to take up this challenge.

7. We call for a federal Technology Assessment Office to examine how technology fits in with life on Earth, in our neighborhoods and the quality of our daily lives.

M. THE NATIONAL DEBT

For many years the federal government borrowed hundreds of billions of dollars. Money that should have been going into a better “safety net” for the poor, homes for the homeless, new business and jobs, research and development, roads and bridges, schools and the technologies of tomorrow, has been lost to servicing the national debt (currently over \$5 trillion).

We now have surpluses and projected larger surpluses. However, we cannot ignore the consequences of our nation’s past deficits and the related costs of debt service.

Working people and the small business community are shouldering a disproportionate amount the debt burden. Yet the incurring of the federal debt was, to a large degree, the end product of those who were on watch during the Cold War and military-defense industry buildup. Hundreds of billions were lost in the savings and loan bailout. The billions upon billions were lost on loopholes, tax breaks, and transnational/multinational corporate tax avoidance. Hundreds of billions were lost due to a failed tax code that has been, in effect, held prisoner to special interests and has produced historic gross inequities between corporate America and working Americans. During the 1980s, our national debt grew from approximately \$1 trillion to

over \$5 trillion.

During that time, we refused to fund Social Security, food stamps, public housing, higher education, public transportation, etc., etc. In effect when you neglect the economic well-being of the society and refuse to protect the environment, the result can hardly be described as a surplus.

1. We must continue to move toward reduction in the national debt and we must make up for the neglect that the deficits caused.
2. We believe a comprehensive approach that forms a basis for a DEBT REDUCTION AND NEGLECT REDUCTION PLAN would include debt payback; increased revenues; and decreased expenditures in some areas.
3. We support increases in domestic and discretionary spending that is our nation’s essential “safety net,” protecting those most in need. We support increases in the portion of entitlement benefits (one-fifth) that go to the children, the lowest income, aged, blind and disabled. These include food stamps, family assistance, Medicaid, and supplementary security income.
4. We support increased funding for Social Security, public housing, higher education, public transportation, environmental protection, renewable energy and energy conservation.
5. To help make up for our nation’s neglect, we support tax increases on mega-corporate and wealthy interests; defense budget reductions (see FOREIGN POLICY); and entitlement reductions to those who can afford reductions most. Entitlement spending is over one-half of the federal budget. One way to reduce entitlement costs substantially would be by “means testing,” i.e. by scaling back payments to the six million citizens in families with incomes over \$50,000 annually.

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