

# Washington State 7<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Democrats

## Platform

Adopted April 17, 2010

**PREAMBLE:** This platform supports our belief that government exists to accomplish for us collectively that which we cannot accomplish individually.

We believe that in a republic, democratic principles are the foundation of a safe, stable, and prosperous future and that these principles must be woven into the fabric of our social, cultural, and economic lives.

We believe that citizens have a responsibility to actively participate in government and thus to help ensure governmental accountability and openness; and a personal obligation to actively promote individual responsibility and mutual respect.

**PURPOSE:** We adopt this platform to help ensure that voters understand our principles and candidates for public office have the opportunity to understand and support our goals.

## PLATFORM

**AGRICULTURE:** We believe agriculture is a domestic strategic resource vital to American independence and national security.

***We recognize:*** That agriculture is the number one industry in Washington and requires active consideration in all decision making at every level of government.

***We support:***

- local food production as part of national sustainability focus;
- governmental responsibility for ensuring the safety of our imported and domestic food supply;
- adequate governmental support for agricultural research and extension programs;
- new and sustainable development in rural areas.

**COMMUNICATION:** We believe that efficient methods of communication are critical for a well-informed citizenry and that the free and open exchange of ideas is a foundation of a democratic society.

***We recognize:*** That rural areas require effective communication resources including reliable high speed internet access, affordable access to a spectrum of radio and TV stations that offer diverse programming, and print resources that allow for and provide coverage of a variety of topics of interest to the community they serve.

***We support:***

- increasing affordable access to high speed internet in our rural communities;
- encouraging minority and community media ownership;
- funding for public broadcasting including documentary films and non-commercial news programs;

- internet neutrality;
- free access to broadcast television and radio.

**ECONOMY:** We believe a strong and stable economy is essential to a democracy.

***We recognize:*** That strong, healthy corporations are vital to our economy and to maintaining an acceptable standard of living.

***We support:***

- economic policies conducive to the growth of entrepreneurship and small business in our communities;
- programs that provide an economic stimulus for survival, protection, and improvement of rural communities
- granting tax incentives to firms creating jobs and eliminating tax incentives for firms exporting jobs;
- establishing limits on excessive executive compensation;
- oversight and regulation of investment banks;
- corporate officers and boards being held responsible for actions and malfeasance of their companies;
- the opinion that corporations are not protected under the US Constitution with the same rights as individuals;
- fair trade policies that include living wages and environmental protection.

**EDUCATION:** We believe public schools are integral to a strong democracy, bringing together people with diverse experiences, abilities and backgrounds for the common purpose of learning.

***We recognize:*** That it is the duty of government to make appropriate financial provision for the education of all children and to provide access to affordable public education for people of all ages.

***We support:***

- stable and adequate funding for public education for all ages;
- stable and adequate funding for all governmentally mandated programs including gifted, and special education programs;
- stable and adequate funding for vocational education programs to maintain a well trained workforce;
- simple majority votes for all school levies and bond issues;
- providing for a variety of school and student assessments instead of relying on one defining tool.

**ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY:** We believe a healthy economy depends upon a healthy environment.

***We recognize:*** That there is a need for strong environmental protection laws incorporating wise land use planning and the importance of sustainable development.

***We support:***

- science conducted without the interference of politics;
- conservation and development of clean, efficient, renewable, sources of power;
- efforts to make energy independence a reality for our nation;
- strong public policy that preserves wilderness, old-growth, road free areas, wildlife, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas;
- the promotion of reuse and recycling of materials.

**FOREIGN POLICY:** We believe that the nation should focus on a rebuilding of our reputation in the world as a cooperative and just country.

***We recognize:*** That our country is a leader in the world community and as such must maintain and demonstrate ethical standards in its relations with other countries.

***We support:***

- using diplomacy as the first approach in any conflict resolution;
- a multilateral approach to foreign policy;
- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- full and active participation in the International World Court.

**GOVERNMENT & POLITICAL REFORM:** We believe that government must reflect our values as citizens and as such it must be fiscally sound, operate ethically, and be open, transparent and accountable to the people.

***We recognize:*** That taxes are the price of a civil society.

***We support:***

- taxes that are levied fairly and which are spent frugally;
- government agencies should be appropriately funded and fully accountable;
- government operations must be open and transparent;
- provisions for guaranteeing ethical accountability of government officials;
- disallowing unfunded mandates;
- consistent application of due process prior to accessing personal information or communications;
- an open and fair blanket primary system for Washington State;
- public financing of election campaigns.

**HEALTH CARE:** We believe access to quality mental and physical health care is a basic human right and is essential to national safety and well-being.

***We recognize:*** That the current state of health care funding and coverage is not adequate and that effectively addressing this issue is a complex process but one that must be accomplished for the well-being of our citizens.

***We support:***

- creating a comprehensive health care system that is universal, publicly funded, single-payer and preserves consumer choice;
- amending the Medicare prescription drug benefit to require pricing negotiations with pharmaceutical manufacturers;
- improving Medicaid benefits to adequately cover home-care and facility care services;
- maintaining Medicare as a public program instead of privatization;
- requiring pharmacists to fill prescriptions authorized by a physician;
- increasing funding for prevention programs and disease research;
- maintaining a person's right to privacy in health care decisions.

**HUMAN RIGHTS:** We believe that equal and unalienable rights of all human beings are the foundation of freedom and justice and are essential to the preservation of democracy.

***We recognize:*** That individuals have the right to privacy in all personal matters and that discrimination against any individual or group that limits rights granted to all citizens undermines the strength of our democracy.

***We support:***

- affordable access to legal services for people experiencing discrimination;
- use of education and treatment programs to supplement incarceration;
- formal recognition of domestic partnership status as existing between two individuals who formalize their relationship allowing fully and equally in the same rights, responsibilities and commitments granted through civil marriage;
- equal pay for equal work;
- separation of church and state;
- application of the Geneva Convention to all detainees, foreign or domestic, no matter where they are held;
- rights covered under treaties with all native Americans;
- protection of basic human and civil rights as guaranteed by our Constitution and the Bill of Rights even in times of national crisis;
- confidentiality of financial, medical, and genetic information.

**LABOR & ECONOMIC JUSTICE:** We believe that economic fairness is a cornerstone of a democratic society and that a living wage is a basic right.

***We recognize:*** That economic justice for working families is essential for the realization of a democratic society.

***We support:***

- maintaining a separate and dedicated Social Security Trust Fund as well as disabled and dependent survivor Social Security benefits;
- creating and maintaining a minimum wage that is a living wage;
- creating a progressive tax system at both the state and federal level;
- maintaining the rights of all workers to organize and use mediation, arbitration, and the right to strike without fear of reprisal or replacement;
- equal pay for equal work;
- a workers' bill of rights that includes right of assembly, association and free speech, due process, freedom from discrimination, and democracy within unions;
- providing a safe and healthy work environment for workers;
- legislation to provide oversight and protection to guarantee the security of pension retirement funds.

**LAW & JUSTICE:** We believe that government has the responsibility to help alleviate social conditions that contribute to crime and that criminal justice and human rights are linked.

***We recognize:*** That law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve have an obligation to work together assuming mutual responsibility for safety and prevention of crime;

***We support:***

- a citizen's constitutional right to own firearms and to use them for legal purposes;
- combating drug addiction by increasing our focus on treatment and education;
- timely DNA testing in criminal prosecutions;
- law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve, must work together assuming mutual responsibility for safety and prevention of crime;
- ensuring that violence doesn't become an accepted fact in our communities;
- elimination of discriminatory profiling by government and law enforcement.

**MILITARY:** We believe in the value of a highly trained and well prepared military.

***We recognize:*** That that serving in the military is an honor and privilege and we are proud of our citizens' military contributions to the nation.

***We support:***

- Fairchild Air Force Base and other military facilities as an integral part of our community and our national defense;
- expanding medical coverage, including comprehensive psychiatric services, for veterans and their families suffering from service-related disorders;
- preservation of Veteran's Administration hospitals and clinics;
- complete funding of all Veteran's Administration hospitals and medical treatment facilities for disabled veterans, and increased funding for long term care;
- no-cost treatment at military medical facilities for military retirees;
- the right of all persons serving in the military to serve free of sexual harassment and sexual assault;
- elimination of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that excludes qualified personnel from military service.

**TRANSPORTATION:** We believe that transportation systems that are efficient, flexible and take into account future needs are important to a healthy economy and environment.

***We recognize:*** That investing in public infrastructure to broaden rural and urban transportation benefits the long-term vitality of a community.

***We support:***

- public involvement at all levels in developing transportation plans and systems;
- improved facilities and sidewalks for pedestrians and non-motorized movement of people;
- maintenance and enhancement of heavy rail and slack-water navigation;
- tax credits for vehicles that exceed gas mileage guidelines or use alternative fuels.