

MOCK CONVENTION

2020

PLATFORM



Ohio Wesleyan University

February 21-22, 2020

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1 **PREAMBLE**

2 Our world is on fire, literally as well as figuratively. Since the end of World War II, democratic
3 nations have built responsive institutions and sought to spread democracy, prosperity, and human
4 rights around the globe. Today, those institutions and the very world we live in are under attack.
5 This destruction of our institutions and of our environment is being led by those who wish to
6 concentrate power in the hands of the few. Our country stands at a crossroads. Down one path lies
7 a country with pervasive gun violence, restricted access to the ballot box, crumbling infrastructure,
8 declining public schools, stagnant wages, unequal access to healthcare, and dwindling moral
9 leadership in the world. Down a second path is a country where children feel safe from the threat of
10 gun violence; where voting rights, civil rights, and democratic norms are protected; where every
11 child has a right to a world-class public education; where everyone who works can earn a living
12 wage; where Main Street comes before Wall Street; where healthcare is not a privilege, but a human
13 right; and where American moral leadership guides the world. This second path is the vision of the
14 Democratic Party in 2020. The Democratic Party, under the administration of a Democratic
15 President, will deliver us down that path. Our planet, and our democracy, are waiting for us to act.
16 Our very future depends on it, and the future is ours.

17 *Sincerely Yours,*
18 *The Platform Committee*

19 *Ellie Bearss '22* *Veronica Cody '22* *Brianna DeMuth '23*
20 *Alexis Greene '21* *Dylan Paul Hays '20* *Greg Margevicius '20*

21 With special thanks to Dr. Franchesca Nestor, Politics and Government Department

22 **SECTION 1: ENVIRONMENT - SECURING A GLOBAL FUTURE**

23 The Democratic Party recognizes climate change as an existential threat to the United States and the
24 rest of the world. The current climate crisis is a threat not only to our natural environment, but to
25 our economy, health, job security, and national security. The Republican Party under the leadership
26 of Donald Trump is currently the biggest threat to the fight against climate change, and is putting
27 the futures of millions of Americans at risk. Under President Trump, ninety-five environmental
28 regulations have been rolled back to help wealthy corporations make a short-term profit. When the
29 Democratic Party takes back the Oval Office, we will restore environmental agencies to full funding
30 and set a path toward 100% renewable energy, and ultimately, carbon neutrality with net-zero
31 carbon emissions.

32 **RESTORE FUNDING TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

33 Under a Democratic White House, the EPA budget will be fully restored. The Democratic Party
34 recognizes the important work the EPA does for the protection and safety of this country, and
35 ensuring the agency is properly funded is the first of many step to addressing the climate crisis.

36 **SET THE U.S. ON A PATHWAY TO 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES**

37 Democrats are committed to carbon neutrality by the year 2050. To achieve this goal, we support
38 the passage of The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, which would establish a national
39 carbon tax that would be returned as monthly rebates in tax returns from the proceeds. This bill
40 would not only help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but introduce a border carbon adjustment on
41 imported carbon-heavy products and discourage companies from moving overseas, aiding the
42 domestic economy.

43 **REJOIN THE PARIS CLIMATE ACCORD**

44 Under President Obama, America took a giant leap forward, joining the Paris Climate Accord in
45 2015. However, in 2017, President Trump announced that the U.S. would pull out of the Paris
46 agreement. The Democratic party and its winning candidate will rejoin the Paris Climate Accord

47 immediately, and reestablish the United States as a leader in the fight against climate change.

48 **ESTABLISH RIGHTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS OF INDIGENOUS**
49 **LANDS**

50 The Indigenous peoples of America know how precious our environment is and have been at the
51 forefront of defending it. We have a legal and moral obligation to the Indigenous peoples of this
52 continent, who we have repeatedly failed throughout our country's history. We condemn the
53 creation of the Keystone XL & Dakota Access Pipeline, which shut out Native people from the
54 environmental review and ignored their concerns; we will ensure that these pipelines are shut down
55 and no new ones are built. We will work to empower the first nations and provide sufficient and
56 meaningful resources to reinforce economic independence. We will restore tribal lands by
57 continuing the land-into-trust process and recognizing the right of all tribes to protect their lands,
58 air, and waters.

59 **SECTION 2: STRUCTURAL CHANGE - LIBERTY FOR ALL**

60 **VOTING ACCESS**

61 Ensuring that all Americans have the right to vote is a core principle of the Democratic Party. Our
62 democracy suffers when nearly two-thirds of our citizens do not or cannot participate. This is why
63 the House of Representatives passed the For the People Act of 2019, which limited partisan
64 gerrymandering and the influence of private donor money in elections. Under a Democratic
65 President, we will push this bill through the Senate and strengthen the protections accorded by the
66 Voting Rights Act--bringing our democracy into the 21st century by expanding early voting and
67 vote-by-mail, implementing same-day voter registration, ending gerrymandering, and making
68 Election Day a national holiday. We will restore voting rights for those who have served their
69 sentences and continue the fight against discriminatory voter identification laws, which
70 disproportionately hurt young voters, people of color, low-income families, people with disabilities,
71 and the elderly. We will also work to pass a Constitutional amendment to repeal Citizens United and
72 take the corporate money out of politics.

73 EDUCATION

74 Democrats believe that every child should be guaranteed a world-class public education. The quality
75 of education for children in America should not vary on the basis of race, socioeconomic status, or
76 zip code.

77 **Addressing The Student Loan Debt Crisis**

78 The Democratic Party believes that a college degree is a critical pathway to future success. However,
79 too many students are unable to afford the cost of college and/or graduate with debt that will be
80 difficult to repay in this economy. We will address bankruptcy laws that stripped private student
81 loans from protection and develop a strategy to eliminate predatory college lending. We will also
82 expand access to vocational schooling to fill the country's need for skilled tradespeople.

83 **Increase Funding for Federal Subsidized Student Loans & Pell Grant**

84 We will increase funding for government-subsidized educational loans so that more students can
85 receive the aid they need, as well as set a maximum interest rate and a longer repayment period for
86 student loans. We will also strengthen the Public Service Loan Forgiveness plan, which benefits
87 those in public service fields, like firefighters, police officers, and teachers. Additionally, we believe
88 the Pell Grants should cover the full cost of schooling at a four-year public institution. Students who
89 are eligible for a full Pell Grant cannot afford a semester without other forms of aid, and it is
90 imperative that we ensure that anyone who wants to receive a higher level of education should be
91 given the resources to do so, regardless of socioeconomic background.

92 FIGHTING HATE

93 Since Donald Trump's election, hate crimes have been on the rise, and domestic terrorists have
94 taken violent action against our country's most vulnerable citizens. The protests in Charlottesville,
95 the mass shootings at synagogues, and the shootings in El Paso are solemn reminders that one of
96 our greatest enemies is hatred and intolerance. Acts of domestic terrorism strike fear into the hearts
97 of Americans and must be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Our party will continue to work
98 for an America in which everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexual
99 orientation, and gender identity and/or expression can live without fear.

100 **SECTION 3: SOCIAL POLICY - SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE**

101 **GUN CONTROL**

102 Democrats are committed to ensuring the safety of every citizen. The constant threat of gun
103 violence in the United States is unacceptable. In 2019 alone, the United States experienced 417 mass
104 shootings. These shootings happen everywhere, including in the places we expect to be safest, like
105 religious buildings and schools. No child should be afraid to go to school, and no person of faith
106 should be afraid to worship. Gun violence against individuals is also staggering: 15,280 victims have
107 died in 2019 as a result of gun-related homicide, and 24,090 committed suicide using guns.
108 Democrats believe in enforcing common-sense gun laws to protect the public against these threats,
109 including stronger background checks and longer waiting periods. Those who have committed
110 violent crimes should not be able to buy a gun, and we should do whatever we can to curb violence
111 committed by those who act on impulse. Common sense solutions like these are crucial to ensuring
112 Americans' safety.

113 **CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM**

114 There is an overwhelming necessity for criminal justice reform in this country. The United States
115 mass incarceration rate is five times higher than most other countries in the world. The failed War
116 on Drugs is a major contributor to this problem. In 2018 alone, 663,367 arrests were marijuana-
117 related, and Black Americans were four times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession
118 than white Americans. Democrats are devoted to making policy changes that will reduce the prison
119 population and increase educational and psychological resources for incarcerated persons so that
120 they more easily rejoin society upon release.

121 **LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA**

122 We believe that marijuana should be federally legalized, taxed, and regulated. We advocate for the
123 removal of marijuana from the federal government's list of Schedule 1 drugs. We will fight for past
124 marijuana convictions to be expunged and pardon those convicted of non-violent drug offenses—
125 who are disproportionately people of color and the poor.

126 **LGBTQ+ RIGHTS**

127 The Democratic Party supports the LGBTQ+ community in their fight for equal rights. Democrats
128 strongly condemn the laws that have been passed discriminating against trans and non-binary people
129 at school and in the workplace. Democrats believe that those who identify as being in the LGBTQ+
130 community should be protected under the Civil Rights Act. The Democratic Party also recognizes
131 the detrimental effects of conversion therapy on the development and mental health of LGBTQ+
132 youth and supports efforts to outlaw it and other practices that hurt the LGBTQ+ community.

133 **SECTION 4: HEALTHCARE - SECURING HEALTHY LIVES FOR ALL**

134 The Democratic Party believes that equitable access to quality healthcare is a hallmark of a
135 developed society. We believe that healthcare is not a privilege; it is a human right. Democrats are
136 proud of their long history of fighting to ensure affordable and reliable health insurance, and they
137 will continue to fight to protect the programs they have built, like Medicaid, Medicare, and the
138 Affordable Care Act (ACA). The Democratic Party is united in its efforts to combat the rocketing
139 price of healthcare. We are committed to securing a healthy America for generations to come.

140 **REAFFIRM COMMITMENT TO REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**

141 The Democratic Party will work diligently to ensure that Americans have access to quality
142 reproductive care services, including safe and legal abortion. Democrats will continue to challenge
143 federal and state laws and policies that infringe upon the wellbeing and safety of those seeking
144 reproductive healthcare and ensure access for all women, regardless of how much money
145 they make or where they live. Democrats will work to remove the federal barriers put in
146 place to limit access to quality care and work to repeal the Hyde amendment.

147 **INCREASE COVERAGE FOR THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT**

148 Today, American healthcare insurance remains the most expensive in the world. The United States is
149 one of the wealthiest and most developed countries but still falls short on healthcare compared to

150 other developed nations. Racial, ethnic, gender, and social gaps continuously deny many Americans
151 access to quality healthcare. Under Democratic leadership, we will support Medicare for All,
152 legislation that will institute a single public insurance program for all Americans. A single public
153 program provided by the government would eliminate the co-pays, fees, and cost-shares that
154 Americans must pay out of pocket and reduce the cost of pharmaceuticals. This policy is not a
155 handout; in the long run, it will save millions of Americans the stress and burden of paying for
156 extensive medical treatment and hospital bills by spreading the risk across the entire population. We
157 will pay for this program by taxing the wealthiest of Americans. Rather than kicking millions of
158 Americans off of their existing private insurance, however, we will extend existing tax subsidies to
159 higher income brackets to ensure that no one pays more than 8.5 percent of their income in
160 premiums. We will also create a public insurance option that would eliminate co-pays, reduce
161 hospital fees, and make pharmaceuticals affordable and accessible. Any health care plan must ensure
162 comprehensive coverage for mental health wellness, including establishing mental health prevention
163 a priority by fully covering treatment for addiction and mental illness. Since the election of President
164 Trump, federal funding for reproductive healthcare and Planned Parenthood has been severely cut,
165 leaving millions of women and families without comprehensive reproductive care. Any and all
166 federal healthcare systems will establish full and comprehensive reproductive healthcare as a priority
167 while ensuring this care is accessible to all.

168 **SECTION 5: ECONOMIC POLICY - SECURING EQUALITY**

169 Democrats believe that today's extreme levels of income and wealth inequality are bad for our
170 people, bad for our businesses, and bad for our economy. Our country depends on a thriving middle
171 class to drive economic growth, but in recent years, the middle class has been shrinking. Meanwhile,
172 the top one-tenth of one percent of Americans now own almost as much wealth as the bottom
173 ninety percent combined. Billionaires now pay a lower effective tax rate than working-class
174 Americans. Social mobility is far lower than most believe it to be: children who are born to families
175 in the lowest fifth of earnings are ten times more likely to remain there as adults than they are to
176 earn as much as those in the top fifth. And these disparities are even greater for people of color.
177 Beyond insulting our sense of basic fairness, extreme disparities in wealth have repercussions in all
178 areas of society. Unless we invest in building a level playing field, we all lose. The system is not

179 working when we have a rigged economy in which ordinary Americans work longer hours for lower
180 wages, while most new income and wealth goes to the top one percent. Too many Americans are
181 living paycheck to paycheck, and hallmarks of middle-class life—owning a home, accessing
182 affordable and quality childcare, retiring with dignity—feel out of reach. The Democratic Party
183 believes that supporting workers through fair trade agreements, building up our infrastructure,
184 raising the federal minimum wage, and reforming our tax code to help working families are critical in
185 the fight against systemic economic inequality. Only building the middle class, curbing Wall Street
186 greed, and fighting for independent and impartial regulators and agencies, will help us to build a
187 future that is truly ours.

188 **FAIR TRADE**

189 We believe that America must engage in free and fair trade with like-minded countries. Our trade
190 policy must make sure that American workers and their families are not sold short in order to
191 increase the profits of multinational companies. Our trade policy must also reflect the reality of
192 climate change and ensure that environmental protections are written into every agreement we sign.
193 Furthermore, Democrats will do something that President Trump has failed to do: hold China
194 accountable for their unfair trade practices. Instead of addressing this issue, President Trump has
195 resorted to ineffective and outdated tariffs that harm American farmers and consumers.

196 **FEDERAL MINIMUM WAGE**

197 Democrats believe in a living wage and will fight to raise the minimum wage to fifteen dollars per
198 hour. No one who works full time should have to raise a family in poverty. We also support creating
199 one fair wage for all workers by ending the subminimum wage for tipped workers and people with
200 disabilities. Democrats also know the value of unions and will fight to ensure that all Americans
201 have the right to join a union.

202 **TAX REFORM**

203 The Democratic Party will reform the tax code so that it provides jobs and opportunities for the
204 middle class. Since President Trump signed the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), which cut taxes

205 for multinational corporations while pushing additional tax burdens on middle-class homeowners,
206 the deficit has ballooned. The Democratic Party will reduce the tax burden on the middle class
207 *without* increasing the deficit. We will do so by eliminating loopholes for hedge fund managers, like
208 carried interest, instituting a financial transaction tax on Wall Street speculation, and raising the
209 capital gains tax rate, so that labor and capital are taxed equally. We will eliminate corporate tax
210 havens for countries that move jobs overseas and tax the income of Millionaires and Billionaires by
211 raising the top marginal income tax rate so that they pay their fair share. These measures will allow
212 us to help middle and lower-income workers by increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit and
213 eliminating the cap on deductions for State and Local taxes. Democrats will also protect the
214 bedrocks of American retirement, Social Security and Medicare, by opposing privatization and
215 attempts to make workers work until they are well into their mid 70's.

216 **ADDRESS SYSTEMIC WEALTH INEQUALITY**

217 Since the 1980s, income inequality has increased at a staggering rate. In 1984, families in poverty had
218 a twelve percent share of the nation's income, and the top one percent of families also had a twelve
219 percent share of the nation's income. By 2017, even before the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act's (TCJA)
220 giveaways to CEOs and Wall Street took effect, families in poverty had a ten percent share of the
221 nation's income, while the top one percent had a twenty-one percent share of the nation's income.
222 The Democratic Party will put Main Street over Wall Street and crackdown on Wall Street criminals
223 who wish to prey on middle-class workers and retirement investors. Income inequality is even more
224 concerning for women and people of color. Women are paid seventy-nine cents for every dollar
225 earned by men. The gender wage gap is only compounded by the racial wage gap. In 2000, the
226 average black worker earned around seventy-eight percent of the average white worker's wage. In
227 2018, the average black worker earned closer to seventy-two percent of the average white worker's
228 wage. The Democratic Party seeks to close these gaps to create an economy that works for every
229 American. Building an economy that allows for social mobility is crucial to restoring the American
230 dream.

231 **Job Creation**

232 The Democratic Party believes that the best way to build up the middle class is through the creation

233 of strong middle-class jobs—jobs that provide a good wage, good working conditions, organizing
234 rights and enable workers to provide a respectable standard of living for their families. We must
235 level the playing field to ensure everyone has the opportunity to reach the American dream. To that
236 end, we will fight monopolistic practices by big corporations.

237 **Independent and Impartial Regulators and Agencies**

238 When we invest our trust in our public servants, we expect them to carry out the laws dutifully
239 enacted by our elected representatives. Public servants cannot be beholden to the industries that
240 they regulate. A Democratic President will choose nominees for positions of authority that have
241 track records of standing up to the powers that be and fighting for everyday Americans.
242 Additionally, we will oppose the tactic of cutting regulatory agencies budgets so often employed by
243 congressional Republicans in order to protect those in power. Democrats will protect the Consumer
244 Financial Protection Bureau to ensure fair consumer lending processes. The Democratic Party will
245 also protect the Post Office from any attempt to privatize it, as well as expand the basic operations
246 of the Post Office to offer basic banking options for citizens.

247 **SECTION 6: FOREIGN AFFAIRS - RESTORING AMERICAN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP**

248 Democrats believe that America must lead in the world to grow our economy, protect our interests
249 and values, and make our country safer and more prosperous. President Obama reaffirmed
250 American leadership after the disastrous wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. President Trump has
251 abdicated our international responsibilities and once again tarnished America’s image in the eyes of
252 the world. Democrats believe that when America leads, it must be as a principled force for peace
253 and prosperity in the world. We believe all people deserve to live in dignity and have their rights
254 respected. We believe that protecting rights and opportunities for women and girls is essential for
255 security and economic growth. We believe that providing access to education and employment for
256 young people and safeguarding the rights of minorities is important to ensuring stability. We believe
257 that the smart use of diplomacy, development, and economic statecraft can prevent crises, foster
258 stability, and make us safer. Democrats know that our global network of alliances is not a burden—
259 it is a source of tremendous strategic advantage. We believe that our military must be the strongest
260 in the world but it should only be sent into combat when the terms of engagement are clearly

261 presented to the American people and our troops have what they need to fulfill their mission. We
262 believe that war must always be a last resort--never the first choice. We are the party that won two
263 world wars, created the United Nations and North Atlantic Treaty Organization, brought Osama bin
264 Laden to justice, and blocked Iran's ability to pursue a nuclear weapon. America is stronger abroad
265 and safer at home because of the principled leadership of the Democratic Party. We lead with
266 purpose, not behind walls. With American leadership, guided by our principles and in concert with
267 our allies and partners, the coming years can be the most stable, secure, and prosperous time we and
268 the world have ever known.

269 **POLICY ON THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

270 America's bilateral partnership with Russia is in a tense stalemate, and economic relations continue
271 to deteriorate. The Democratic party roundly condemns the Russian attempts to interfere in the
272 2016 election—which were confirmed by U.S. intelligence—and will work to hold Russia
273 accountable for these efforts, as well as for any attempt to interfere with the 2020 election.
274 The Democratic party is concerned about Putin's attempts to undermine democratic authority in the
275 Russian State and its destabilizing actions on the Ukraine border. We will hold firm against further
276 incursions into sovereign territory and stand with the Russian people against further deterioration of
277 Russian democratic institutions.

278 **POLICY ON THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

279 The Democratic Party seeks a positive bilateral relationship with China despite President Trump's
280 trade war. The PRC continues to be one of America's largest trading partners, as well as a partner in
281 defense--as a watchdog to North Korean threats. However, as China bears down its authoritarian
282 government, making territory claims on Inner Mongolia, Tibet and the South China Sea, and
283 engaging in religious persecution of the Uighurs and Christians, the United States keeps a watchful
284 eye on its long-standing and powerful global ally.

285 **MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS**

286 The Democratic Party believes that the United States must lead by example and not with bullets.

287 Furthermore, the Democratic Party believes that the Framers gave Congress the power to make and
288 declare war to ensure a balance of powers and to rein in an adventurous executive branch; the War
289 Powers Resolution is an extension of such power and should be enforced as the law of the land.
290 President Obama’s leadership brought our country a deal that kept Iran from getting a nuclear
291 weapon-- all the while ensuring that verification procedures remained in place. When President
292 Trump withdrew from the agreement, he put the United States at risk and threatened a delicate
293 balance of power in the Middle East. The Democratic Party would go back to the table to prevent
294 Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. The Democratic Party will also continue to support the state of
295 Israel but will also work toward a two-state solution by supporting the creation of a state for the
296 Palestinian people. This is the only way to provide a homeland for the Palestinian people, combat
297 Hamasm, and keep Israelis safe as well.

298 **SECTION 7: SECURING THE AMERICAN DREAM**

299 The Democratic Party believes that the future of America should be one characterized by
300 inclusiveness and diversity, and we reaffirm this great nation’s appreciation for immigrants. If
301 Republicans continue to ignore the growing diversity of America, then they will find themselves
302 unfit to serve those very populations they represent. The ideas, drive, and diversity immigrants have
303 brought to this country have set the United States apart in global affairs and technological
304 innovation. The building of a southern border wall is a useless burden on the American taxpayer and
305 a symbol of division and intolerance. This wall would waste millions of dollars, with no benefit to
306 the everyday lives of those providing its funding. Democrats favor more evidence-based solutions
307 for border security, such as expanding the number of immigration judges in order to more quickly
308 process those seeking asylum and providing humanitarian and legal aid to those living in border
309 communities. The future of the Democratic party relies on a comprehensive immigration reform
310 that includes pathways to citizenship and a more equitable process. This is the only way to create
311 opportunities for all.

312 **STOP THE MASS DEPORTATIONS OF NON-VIOLENT IMMIGRANTS AND** 313 **REFUGEES**

314 The mass deportations that have taken place during the past decade must stop. The Trump
315 administration's zero-tolerance policy has done irreparable harm to thousands of children and their
316 families. The inhumane separation of families both at the border and through deportations is a
317 humanitarian crisis. For those seeking asylum, the United States should be a place of safety and
318 security. For those who are escaping deadly wars, violence, climate change, and political oppression,
319 America should be a symbol of hope. America has always been a nation of immigrants and refugees,
320 and we must reaffirm our commitment to this ideal.

321 **RESTRUCTURE AND REORGANIZE THE IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS**
322 **ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (ICE)**

323 Frequently the subject of scrutiny and investigation, under President Trump's administration, ICE
324 has separated families, kept children in cages, and been responsible for the negligent deaths of those
325 imprisoned. Restructuring and demilitarizing ICE is crucial for rekindling relationships with
326 communities along our border.

327 **EXPAND DACA AND DAPA PROTECTIONS**

328 President Trump's attempt to end and protections promised by the Deferred Action for Childhood
329 Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) reaffirmed his
330 commitment to benefit only groups who serve him. The economic privilege one needs to properly
331 immigrate under the current system has too many financial barriers and has led many who wish to
332 become U.S. Citizens to choose other ways to expand their economic and social opportunities.
333 DACA and DAPA should be expanded not only to guarantee safety for those who have already
334 established lives in the United States but also to create a pathway to citizenship.

335 **MINORITY PLANK**

