

2020 Democratic Party Platform

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1		
2		
3		
4		
5	DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	4
6	PREAMBLE	5
7	PROTECTING AMERICANS AND RECOVERING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC	8
8	BUILDING A STRONGER, FAIRER ECONOMY	12
9	Protecting Workers and Families and Creating Millions of Jobs Across America	14
10	Raising Wages and Promoting Workers' Rights	14
11	Enacting Robust Work-Family Policies	15
12	Investing in the Engines of Job Creation	15
13	Building A Fair System of International Trade for Our Workers	18
14	Putting Homeownership in Reach and Guaranteeing Safe Housing for Every American	19
15	Leveling the Economic Playing Field	20
16	Reforming the Tax Code to Benefit Working Families	20
17	Curbing Wall Street Abuses	21
18	Ending Poverty	21
19	Protecting Consumer Rights and Privacy	22
20	Tackling Runaway Corporate Concentration	23
21	Guaranteeing a Secure and Dignified Retirement	23
22	ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL, AFFORDABLE, QUALITY HEALTH CARE	24
23	Securing Universal Health Care Through a Public Option	25
24	Bringing Down Drug Prices and Taking on the Pharmaceutical Industry	26
25	Reducing Health Care Costs and Improving Health Care Quality	27
26	Expanding Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment	27
27	Expanding Long-Term Care Services and Supports	28
28	Eliminate Racial, Gender, and Geographic Health Inequities	28
29	Protecting Native American Health	29
30	Securing Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice	29
31	Protecting and Promoting Maternal Health	30
32	Protecting LGBTQ+ Health	30
33	Strengthening and Supporting the Health Care Workforce	30
34	Investing in Health Science and Research	31
35	PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AND BUILDING TRUST BY REFORMING OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE	
36	SYSTEM	32
37	HEALING THE SOUL OF AMERICA	35
38	Protecting Americans' Civil Rights	35
39	Achieving Racial Justice and Equity	36
40	Protecting Women's Rights	38

1	Protecting LGBTQ+ Rights	38
2	Protecting Disability Rights	39
3	Honoring Indigenous Tribal Nations	39
4	Ending Violence Against Women	42
5	Ending the Epidemic of Gun Violence	43
6	Supporting Faith and Service	43
7	Supporting Press Freedom	43
8	COMBATING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND PURSUING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE	44
9	RESTORING AND STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY	49
10	Protecting and Enforcing Voting Rights	49
11	Reforming the Broken Campaign Finance System	50
12	Building an Effective, Transparent Federal Government	50
13	Making Washington, D.C. the 51st State	51
14	Guaranteeing Self-Determination for Puerto Rico	51
15	Supporting the U.S. Territories	52
16	Strengthening the U.S. Postal Service	52
17	CREATING A 21ST CENTURY IMMIGRATION SYSTEM	53
18	PROVIDING A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION IN EVERY ZIP CODE	56
19	Guaranteeing Universal Early Childhood Education	57
20	Supporting High-Quality K-12 Schools Across America	58
21	Making Higher Education Affordable and Accessible	60
22	Providing Borrowers Relief From Crushing Student Debt	60
23	RENEWING AMERICAN LEADERSHIP	62
24	Revitalizing American Diplomacy	63
25	Rebuilding America's Tool of First Resort	63
26	Reinventing Alliances	64
27	International Institutions	64
28	Foreign Assistance and Development	65
29	Transforming Our Armed Forces for the 21st century	65
30	Ending Forever Wars	65
31	Securing our Competitive Edge	66
32	Defense Spending	67
33	Keeping Faith with Our Veterans and Military Families	67
34	Civil-Military Relations	68
35	Mobilizing the World to Address Transnational Challenges	68
36	Global Health and Pandemics	68
37	Climate Change	69
38	Technology	70
39	Nonproliferation	70
40	Terrorism	71
41	Democracy and Human Rights	71
42	Advancing American Interests	74

1	Global Economy and Trade	74
2	Africa	75
3	Americas	76
4	Asia-Pacific	77
5	Europe	78
6	Middle East	79
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
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15		
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DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Democratic National Committee wishes to acknowledge that we gather together to state our values on lands that have been stewarded through many centuries by the ancestors and descendants of Tribal Nations who have been here since time immemorial.

We honor the communities native to this continent, and recognize that our country was built on Indigenous homelands.

We pay our respects to the millions of Indigenous people throughout history who have protected our lands, waters, and animals.

We respectfully acknowledge that we present this Platform at our 2020 Democratic National Convention on the lands of the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians, the Forest County Potawatomi Community, the Ho-Chunk Nation, the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Menominee Nation, the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin, the Sokaogon Chippewa Community, and the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Band of Mohican Indians.

1 in the cold. Democrats will forge a new social and economic contract with the American
2 people—a contract that creates millions of new jobs and promotes shared prosperity, closes
3 racial gaps in income and wealth, guarantees the right to join or form a union, raises wages and
4 ensures equal pay for women and paid family leave for all, and safeguards a secure and dignified
5 retirement.

6
7 We must guarantee health care not as a privilege for some, but as a right for every single
8 American. For a century, Democrats have fought to secure universal health care. In the depths of
9 the COVID-19 pandemic, President Trump and the Republican Party are trying to tear health
10 care away from millions of people who depend on it for survival. Democrats will not allow that
11 to happen. We will not rest until every American can access quality health care and affordable
12 prescription drugs.

13
14 We must steel and strengthen our democracy, not distort and debase it. Democrats believe there
15 is nothing to fear from the voices and votes of the American people. We will restore the full
16 power of the Voting Rights Act and stamp out voter suppression in all its forms. We will curb
17 the corrupting influence of money in politics and protect the integrity of our elections from all
18 enemies, foreign and domestic. We will never accept political gridlock as our fate. We will never
19 tire in our fight to deliver results and create opportunity for all Americans. And we will end the
20 war on government that has politicized our institutions, denigrated public service, and left the
21 American people on their own instead of working to make them whole.

22
23 We must heal our nation’s deepest wounds, not fan the flames of hate. Democrats will root out
24 structural and systemic racism in our economy and our society, and reform our criminal justice
25 system from top to bottom, because we believe Black lives matter. We will ensure that our nation
26 continues to prize diversity and compassion, and welcomes those who yearn to participate in our
27 great democratic experiment by creating a humane, 21st century immigration system that
28 benefits all Americans.

29
30 We will give hate no safe harbor. We will never amplify or legitimize the voices of bigotry,
31 racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, or white supremacy. Democrats will protect and
32 promote the equal rights of all our citizens—women, LGBTQ+ people, religious minorities,
33 people with disabilities, Native Americans, and all who have been discriminated against in too
34 many ways and for too many generations. We commit ourselves to the vision articulated by
35 Frederick Douglass of “a Government founded upon justice, and recognizing the equal rights of
36 all.”

37
38 We must lead the world in taking on the climate crisis, not deny the science and accelerate the
39 damage. From Houston, Texas, to Mexico Beach, Florida; from San Juan, Puerto Rico, to
40 Davenport, Iowa, the last four years have seen record-breaking storms, devastating wildfires, and
41 historic floods. Democrats will rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement and go further, building a
42 thriving, equitable, and globally competitive clean energy economy that puts workers and
43 communities first, and leaves no one behind.

44
45 We must provide a world-class education in every ZIP code, to every child, because education is
46 a critical public good. Democrats believe in universal early childhood education, and affordable,

1 high-quality child care. We will shut down the school-to-prison pipeline, and build a school-to-
2 opportunity pipeline in its place. We will make college affordable again, and give Americans
3 relief from crushing student debt.
4

5 We commit to a foreign policy that accelerates our domestic renewal, not undermines it. We will
6 focus on what matters most to Americans—more and better jobs, greater security, a cleaner
7 environment, and a more inclusive and resilient society. Democrats will lead with diplomacy as
8 our tool of first resort and mobilize our allies and partners to meet the tests none of us can meet
9 on our own. We will stand up to the forces of authoritarianism, not aid and abet their rise, and we
10 will speak and act with clarity and purpose on behalf of human rights wherever they are under
11 threat. And we will honor our sacred covenant with our women and men in uniform, our
12 veterans, and our military families who have carried the burdens of wars that must—at long
13 last—come to an end.
14

15 Above all, Democrats still believe in the American idea—its principles, its purpose, and its
16 promise. We know that four more years of the crass, craven, corrupt leadership we have seen
17 from Donald Trump and the Republican Party will damage our character and our country beyond
18 repair. We pray, as Langston Hughes did, “O, let America be America again—the land that never
19 has been yet—and yet must be—the land where *every* man is free.” Democrats call on all
20 Americans to come together and seize this last, best chance to restore the soul of our nation—and
21 vote this November to ensure our greatest days are still to come.
22
23

DRAFT

1
2 **PROTECTING AMERICANS AND RECOVERING FROM THE COVID-19**
3 **PANDEMIC**
4

5 When we do not have competent, experienced, compassionate leaders in government, the
6 American people suffer. That is the case with the novel coronavirus. President Trump and his
7 Administration missed multiple opportunities to protect the American people from this deadly
8 pathogen. Instead of recognizing the danger and confronting it head-on, President Trump lied to
9 the American people about the disease's severity, its transmissibility, and the threat it posed to
10 lives and livelihoods.

11
12 Make no mistake: President Trump's abject failure to respond forcefully and capably to the
13 COVID-19 pandemic—his failure to lead—makes him responsible for the deaths of tens of
14 thousands of Americans.

15
16 COVID-19 has laid bare deep fault lines in our economy, our society, and our health care
17 system. Disparities in health care access, in environmental quality, in the employment market,
18 and in housing have contributed to disproportionate rates of infection and death among Black
19 Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos.

20
21 President Trump's failure to pay attention to early intelligence reports about the pandemic
22 wasted critical weeks in which we could have prepared for the outbreak. Once the pandemic
23 began spreading in the United States, the President's failure to lay out clear, consistent guidelines
24 for cities, states, businesses, and school districts to control the spread of COVID-19 created
25 widespread confusion and chaos. His reckless disregard for the advice of public health experts
26 has made it harder for mayors and governors to protect the American people. Rather than surge
27 the production of personal protective equipment and other critical supplies where they were
28 needed most, the Administration held life-saving resources hostage for political obeisance.
29 Instead of bringing Americans together, President Trump tried to divide us, using racist and
30 xenophobic rhetoric that has contributed to an increase in hate crimes against Asian Americans
31 and Pacific Islanders. And in the midst of the pandemic, the Trump Administration is arguing in
32 court to invalidate the Affordable Care Act and rip health coverage away from tens of millions of
33 people.

34
35 President Trump and his Administration have also failed to drive an economic response that is
36 commensurate with the scale of the challenge before us, preferring to act as though the recession
37 caused by his incompetent mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic will correct itself. He has
38 hung small businesses out to dry while cutting blank checks to the largest corporations; failed to
39 enact adequate support for public school systems, colleges, universities, and state and local
40 governments to maintain public services and jobs; endangered the health of essential workers by
41 failing to enact workplace safety standards; and neglected to protect working families from
42 economic ruin.

43
44 Democrats will save lives by using every available tool to beat back this pandemic, which
45 continues to sicken and kill hundreds of Americans per day, and lead a global effort to prevent,
46 detect, and respond to future pandemic threats.

1
2 We must start by making COVID-19 testing widely available, convenient, and free to everyone.
3 We must also expand funding so state and local public health departments can hire sufficient
4 staff to conduct contact tracing for everyone who tests positive for the novel coronavirus. Only
5 through widespread, regular testing and tracing can we hope to understand the scope of the
6 pandemic and contain it.
7

8 In a public health crisis, we all have to rely on each other. That's why Democrats support making
9 COVID-19 testing, treatment, and any eventual vaccines free to everyone, regardless of their
10 wealth, insurance coverage, or immigration status. We are all only as safe from this disease as
11 are the most vulnerable among us.
12

13 It has always been a crisis that tens of millions of Americans have no or inadequate health
14 insurance—but in a pandemic, it's catastrophic for public health. The current crisis would be
15 even worse without the Affordable Care Act in place. But in the COVID-19 pandemic,
16 Americans need even more help, which is why Democrats will take immediate action to preserve
17 and expand health insurance coverage. We will provide direct, increased support to states to
18 enroll eligible adults in Medicaid, have the federal government cover a higher percentage of the
19 bill, and add incentives for states which have not yet expanded Medicaid to do so.
20

21 For people who risk losing their insurance coverage if they lose their jobs in this pandemic and
22 in President Trump's recession, Democrats believe the federal government should pick up 100
23 percent of the tab for COBRA insurance, which keeps people on their employer-sponsored plans.
24 We will re-open the Affordable Care Act marketplaces, even outside of the normal open
25 enrollment season, and expand subsidies to make it easier for people to buy health coverage.
26 Democrats will also make available on the marketplace a public option administered through the
27 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) which includes a platinum-level choice,
28 with low fees and no deductibles. Low-income Americans will be automatically enrolled in the
29 public option at zero cost to them, though they may choose to opt out at any time.
30

31 We will keep these emergency measures in place until the pandemic ends and unemployment
32 falls significantly. And should the United States find itself in another pandemic or severe
33 economic downturn in the future, these protections will be made automatically available, so
34 Americans are never again left to fend for themselves in times of crisis.
35

36 Democrats are appalled that President Trump failed to act on the advice of Congress to maintain
37 a strong stockpile of critical medical supplies, including personal protective equipment, or
38 adequately surge U.S. manufacturing of needed equipment through tools like the Defense
39 Production Act. The resulting equipment shortages endangered millions of lives, including those
40 of our brave frontline health care workers and other essential workers. Such shortages are
41 unacceptable and must never happen again. Democrats will direct the federal government to
42 work with private-sector manufacturers to dramatically scale up the United States' domestic
43 manufacturing capacity for both personal protective equipment and essential medicines. We will
44 restore federal leadership to ensure medical supplies are distributed according to need, not
45 political favoritism, and never put states in the position of having to compete against each other
46 for life-saving materials.

1
2 Democrats will aggressively enforce non-discrimination protections in the Americans with
3 Disabilities Act and other civil rights laws, especially when designing emergency management
4 systems and new facilities and services in response to the pandemic, and prohibit rationing of
5 health care that refuses or diverts hospitalization, treatment, or supplies based on a patient's
6 disability. We recognize people with disabilities living in group homes and other care facilities
7 are at greater risk of contracting COVID-19. We will improve oversight and expand protections
8 for residents and staff at nursing homes, which have seen some of the worst COVID-19
9 outbreaks. And we will expand support for telemedicine, so Americans do not have to go without
10 essential health care during the pandemic.

11
12 America must never again be left vulnerable to a global pandemic. Democrats believe we must
13 follow the informed advice of scientists and public health experts, and will take steps to protect
14 federal scientists from political influence. Democrats will act swiftly to stand up a
15 comprehensive, national public health surveillance program for COVID-19 and future infectious
16 diseases. We will recruit at least 100,000 contact tracers with support from trusted local
17 organizations in the communities most at risk to help state and local health departments use
18 culturally competent approaches to identify people at risk of contracting or spreading the
19 coronavirus.

20
21 Democrats believe we must reverse decades of underinvestment in America's public health
22 infrastructure. We will substantially increase funding for the Centers for Disease Control and
23 Prevention (CDC) and for state and local public health departments, many of which suffered
24 deep budget cuts during the Great Recession and are at risk of further cuts as a result of President
25 Trump's recession. Democrats will support medical and public health research grants for
26 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority-Serving Institutions
27 (MSIs), which are particularly well suited to research health disparities in the context of COVID-
28 19.

29
30 Solving the public health crisis posed by the pandemic is the surest way to get the economy back
31 on track. Countries that have taken aggressive measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic and
32 stop chains of infection from spreading are poised to have stronger, faster recoveries than the
33 United States.

34
35 But containing the pandemic won't be enough to repair the damage President Trump has done to
36 our economy and to the American people—or to build back better.

37
38 During acute economic downturns, Democrats believe that we must take care of our workforce
39 and aim to keep workers whole. We will reform the current unemployment insurance system to
40 enable more workers to remain attached to their jobs, including by promoting payroll support
41 and work-sharing programs with generous rates of wage replacement and requirements that
42 employers maintain workers' benefits. For those workers who do lose their jobs, we will expand
43 the unemployment insurance system to cover more workers, including independent contractors
44 and gig, part-time, and tipped workers; make sure platform companies and companies that
45 misclassify employees as contractors pay in to support the system like other employers do; and
46 raise wage replacement rates, which are far too low in many states. We will expand, not cut,

1 nutrition assistance and food security programs that millions of Americans are relying on in this
2 crisis. Democrats will also make long-overdue investments to upgrade and modernize states'
3 unemployment system technology and ensure the Department of Labor conducts strong oversight
4 of state unemployment systems to make sure that unemployed workers can quickly and
5 efficiently access the benefits they are owed.
6

7 To prevent President Trump's recession from becoming a depression, Democrats believe we
8 must act immediately to make ambitious investments that will support and create jobs. We
9 urgently need to support state and local governments, which are suffering severe budget
10 shortfalls due to declines in tax revenues while being asked to shoulder the burden of COVID-
11 related services and rising unemployment. State and local budget cuts translate quickly into lost
12 jobs in education, health care, and social services—all fields where we need to be adding jobs to
13 meet the needs of the American people. Democrats will extend significant aid to state and local
14 governments, school districts, and public and nonprofit colleges and universities, including
15 HBCUs and MSIs, to address these budget shortfalls and secure jobs. We will condition state and
16 federal aid on maintaining and expanding public-sector employment, including provisions to
17 protect workers' rights.
18

19 In states and cities across the country, too many parents are being forced to choose between
20 keeping their jobs and keeping their children safe. Democrats believe that making child care
21 affordable and widely available is essential to recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. We
22 will provide funding to stabilize the sector and ensure child care and educational settings are able
23 to meet the highest possible public health and worker safety standards to protect the health of
24 care workers, children, parents, and the broader community.
25

26 The COVID-19 pandemic has hit small businesses especially hard. Democrats support making
27 significant, immediate grants and loans to help small businesses make payroll, pay rent and other
28 expenses, and keep their doors open when possible. Some estimates indicate as many as 40
29 percent of Black-owned small businesses may not survive President Trump's recession.
30 Democrats will prioritize support for Black entrepreneurs and other entrepreneurs of color, as
31 well as women entrepreneurs, including by expanding funding for Community Development
32 Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and other proven programs that invest in low-income communities
33 and communities of color.
34

35 We will impose rigorous oversight on big corporations seeking financial assistance to weather
36 the pandemic and President Trump's recession, to ensure that federal dollars support keeping
37 workers on payroll, not enriching CEOs or shareholders. Taxpayer money should not be used to
38 pay out dividends, fund stock buybacks, or give raises to executives.
39

40 No one should have to choose between protecting their health and earning a living. Paid sick
41 leave is a necessity even under normal circumstances, but in a pandemic, it's a matter of national
42 security. We will immediately enact robust paid sick leave protections as part of the COVID-19
43 response for all workers in the economy, including contractors, gig workers, domestic workers,
44 and the self-employed. And Democrats will take immediate action to protect workers on the job
45 where the Trump Administration has neglected them, from meatpacking plants to hospitals,

1 including by issuing and enforcing effective infectious disease workplace safety standards
2 through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

3
4 As millions of Americans have stayed at home to prevent the spread of the pandemic, it is plain
5 to see that in the 21st century, the internet is not optional: it is a vital tool for receiving an
6 education and for participating in the economy, and all Americans need access to high-speed,
7 affordable broadband service. Democrats will take action to prevent states from blocking
8 municipalities and rural co-ops from building publicly-owned broadband networks, and increase
9 federal support for municipal broadband. We will increase public investment in rural, urban, and
10 Tribal broadband infrastructure and offer low-income Americans subsidies for accessing high-
11 speed internet, so children and families can fully participate in school, work, and life from their
12 homes. And Democrats will restore the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) clear
13 authority to take strong enforcement action against broadband providers who violate net
14 neutrality principles through blocking, throttling, paid prioritization, or other measures that
15 create artificial scarcity and raise consumer prices for this vital service.

16
17 President Trump and his Administration have not only failed the American people, they have
18 failed the world. In past public health crises, including the Ebola epidemic, disciplined American
19 diplomacy shaped and led a common global response, rallied public and private resources,
20 accelerated research into treatments and vaccines, and directed global emergency aid. In the
21 COVID-19 pandemic, President Trump not only failed to lead, he actively sabotaged global
22 efforts to slow the pandemic. He refused to work with our partners to identify and coordinate
23 manufacture of potential vaccines; allegedly tried to poach exclusive rights to a vaccine
24 candidate from our ally Germany; cut CDC and State Department programs for early
25 identification of infectious pathogens; withdrew funding and support for the World Health
26 Organization (WHO); and tried to distract from his dereliction of duty by drawing from the
27 authoritarian playbook he so admires—using racist rhetoric to blame “outsiders” and stoke
28 divisions at home.

29
30 Democrats will take the opposite tack by restoring American leadership, driving a coordinated
31 global health and economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and ensuring that we’re far
32 better prepared for future global health emergencies.

33 34 35 **BUILDING A STRONGER, FAIRER ECONOMY** 36

37 The economy is not working for the American people. In a matter of weeks, the abject failure of
38 President Trump and his Administration to competently respond to the COVID-19 pandemic
39 erased all the job gains made since the Obama-Biden Administration pulled the country out of
40 the Great Recession, and plunged the economy into recession once more.

41
42 President Trump inherited the longest economic expansion in American history from the Obama-
43 Biden Administration, and he squandered it. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, President
44 Trump was presiding over a recession in the manufacturing sector, after years of growth in the
45 Obama-Biden Administration. He had the audacity to pay for a permanent tax cut for big
46 business by raising taxes on working families. He launched a reckless trade war with China that

1 cost more than 300,000 American jobs and sent farmers into bankruptcy, decimating the
2 American heartland. He has left our communities vulnerable and exposed to the impacts of
3 climate change, let other countries outpace us in the clean energy revolution America should be
4 leading, and completely failed to fulfill his campaign promise to the American people to invest in
5 rebuilding and modernizing our nation's crumbling infrastructure.

6
7 But our economy was rigged against working families and the middle class even before the novel
8 coronavirus sickened millions and killed more than 140,000 Americans. Working families'
9 incomes have been largely stagnant for decades, while the cost of basic needs—from housing to
10 health care, higher education to child care—keep rising at precipitous rates. Meanwhile, the rich
11 have been capturing a larger and larger share of the economic pie, with incomes for the top one
12 percent growing five times faster than those of the bottom 90 percent.

13
14 America bills itself as the land of opportunity, but intergenerational mobility has plummeted;
15 children born in the United States are less likely to move up the income ladder than those in
16 Canada, Denmark, or the United Kingdom. Women still earn just 82 cents to every dollar men
17 earn, with even greater disparities for women of color. Median incomes are lower and poverty
18 rates are higher for Black Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and some Asian Americans
19 and Pacific Islanders, compared to median white households. And there is a persistent,
20 pernicious racial wealth gap that holds millions of Americans back, with the typical white
21 household holding six times more wealth than the typical Latino family and 10 times more
22 wealth than the typical Black family. President Trump's recession threatens to deepen existing
23 inequities, as Black and Latino workers are less likely to work in jobs that can be done safely
24 from home, less likely to have savings to fall back on, and less likely to be able to access
25 unemployment insurance and other emergency programs electronically.

26
27 That's bad for our economy, bad for our democracy, and bad for the soul of our nation.

28
29 That is why Democrats commit to forging a new social and economic contract with the
30 American people—a contract that invests in the people and promotes shared prosperity, not one
31 that benefits only big corporations and the wealthiest few. One that affirms housing is a right and
32 not a privilege, and which makes a commitment that no one will be homeless or go hungry in the
33 richest country on earth. A new economic contract that raises wages and restores workers' rights
34 to organize, join a union, and collectively bargain. One that at last supports working families and
35 the middle class by securing equal pay for women and paid family leave for all. A new economic
36 contract that provides access for all to reliable and affordable banking and financial services. A
37 new social and economic contract that at last grapples honestly with America's long and ongoing
38 history of racism and disenfranchisement, of segregation and discrimination, and invests instead
39 in building equity and mobility for the people of color who have been left out and left behind for
40 generations.

41
42 Democrats stand ready to take immediate, decisive action to pull the economy out of President
43 Trump's recession by investing in infrastructure, care work, clean energy, and small businesses
44 to put Americans to work in good-paying jobs; shoring up state and local budgets to save jobs
45 and protect public health in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and enacting fundamental

1 reforms to address structural and systemic racism and entrenched income and wealth inequality
2 in our economy and our banking system.

3 4 Protecting Workers and Families and Creating Millions of Jobs Across America 5

6 Americans deserve an economy that works for everyone—not just for the wealthy and the well-
7 connected. But our system has been rigged against the American people. Democrats believe that
8 it is a moral and an economic imperative that we support working families by rebuilding the
9 American middle class for the 21st century, making sure this time that everyone can make it and
10 thrive, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, age, or ZIP code.

11 12 *Raising Wages and Promoting Workers' Rights* 13

14 Democrats will fight to raise wages for working people and improve job quality and security,
15 including by raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. We know that strong American
16 labor unions help increase wages and job standards for workers across the economy, which is
17 why Democrats will prioritize passing the PRO Act and restoring workers' rights, including the
18 right to launch secondary boycotts. We will repeal so-called "right to work" laws that undermine
19 worker power and lead to lower wages and less protection for workers across the economy, and
20 ensure those who have been left without wage and hour protections for decades—including
21 domestic workers and farmworkers—have the same rights as other workers. And we will take
22 action to rein in anti-competitive corporate power by rewriting the rules that have undermined
23 workers' ability to advocate for themselves, including non-compete clauses, no-poaching
24 agreements, and contracts that force workers into mandatory arbitration to resolve violations of
25 employment laws.

26
27 Democrats will recognize unions with majority sign-up—via "card check" processes—and ban
28 captive audience meetings, which employers use to bully and browbeat workers. We will hold
29 executives personally accountable if they interfere in workers' efforts to organize, including
30 issuing criminal penalties for intentional obstruction. We will take action to guarantee that when
31 workers come to the table, they are able to bargain with the employers who actually hold the
32 power, including franchisors, and penalize companies that bargain in bad faith with their
33 workers. Democrats will vigorously protect all private-sector workers' right to strike without fear
34 of coercion, interference, and undue delay. We will also establish the federal government's role
35 in promoting and facilitating collective bargaining and helping the parties bring their
36 negotiations to a rapid and successful conclusion, committing to a high standard for intervening
37 in strikes, including under the Railway Labor Act.
38

39 Democrats believe taxpayer dollars should never flow to employers who steal workers' wages,
40 violate labor laws, or engage in union-busting. We will increase funding and staffing at the
41 Department of Labor to aggressively enforce wage, hour, health, and safety rules across the
42 economy. Democrats believe employees who are being misclassified, including gig and platform
43 workers, deserve wage and workplace protections including minimum wage and overtime pay,
44 and we support using the ABC test to determine employee status.
45

1 Democrats will strengthen labor rights for the more than 20 million public-sector employees in
2 the United States by passing the Public Sector Freedom to Negotiate Act, which would provide a
3 federal guarantee for public-sector employees to bargain for better pay and benefits and the
4 working conditions they deserve.

5
6 We cannot hope to raise wages without taking on the profound racial biases at work in our
7 employment system. The wage gap between Black workers and white workers is higher today
8 than it was 20 years ago. It takes a typical Black woman 19 months to earn what a typical white
9 man earns in 12 months—and for typical Latinas and Native American women, it takes almost
10 two years. Democrats believe we need to be much more proactive and aggressive in rooting out
11 discrimination in our employment system. We will increase funding to the Equal Employment
12 Opportunity Commission and increase its authority to initiate directed investigations into civil
13 rights violations and violations of the rights of people with disabilities. Federal contractors
14 should be required to develop and disclose plans to recruit and promote people of color, women,
15 people with disabilities, and veterans—and be held accountable for delivering.

16 *Enacting Robust Work-Family Policies*

17
18
19 The United States is alone among advanced economies in guaranteeing neither paid sick leave
20 nor paid family leave for all workers. This puts excessive burdens on working families, and
21 especially working mothers, even in the best of times, and is catastrophic for public health in the
22 midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

23
24 Democrats will implement a high-quality paid family leave system that protects workers from
25 the unfair choice between attending to urgent health or caretaking needs and earning a paycheck.
26 We will fight to ensure all employers provide at least 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave
27 for all workers and family units, to enable new parents to recover from childbirth and bond with
28 their newborns or adopted children and allow all workers to take extended time off to care for
29 themselves or an ailing relative.

30
31 Finding and paying for high-quality child care is an emotional, logistical, and financial tightrope
32 for too many parents, and that needs to change. Working parents shouldn't have to choose
33 between keeping their kids safe and earning a paycheck. Democrats will make major investments
34 in quality, affordable child care, including by significantly increasing the Child and Dependent
35 Care Tax Credit and providing access to affordable, high-quality child care on a sliding scale by
36 boosting funding for grants to states to help low-income and middle-class families afford child
37 care. We will improve compensation and benefits for child care providers and enact universal,
38 high-quality pre-K programs for three- and four-year-olds.

39 *Investing in the Engines of Job Creation*

40
41
42 Democrats believe the COVID-19 pandemic, and President Trump's recession, demand
43 unprecedented, transformational federal investments to create family-sustaining and union jobs.

44
45 We believe that the world's richest nation should have the world's best infrastructure system.
46 That's why we will invest in resilient, sustainable, and inclusive infrastructure. Democrats will

1 launch a clean energy revolution through historic investments in clean energy, clean
2 transportation, energy efficiency, and advanced manufacturing.

3
4 We will repair, modernize, and expand our highways, roads, bridges, and airports, including by
5 installing 500,000 public charging stations for electric vehicles, ensuring our passenger
6 transportation systems are resilient to the impacts of climate change, and using safe, modern
7 design approaches that allow drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and others to safely share the road.
8 We will launch our country's second great railroad revolution by investing in high-speed rail,
9 and commit to public transportation as a public good, including ensuring transit jobs are good
10 jobs. Democrats will invest to ensure passenger transportation, including public transit, is
11 affordable to all and accessible to people with disabilities. We will help transform Amtrak from a
12 laggard to a leader in passenger rail accessibility and ensure people with disabilities can receive
13 compensation when disability equipment, like wheelchairs, are lost or damaged by transportation
14 carriers.

15
16 Democrats will upgrade our nation's ports, lock and dam systems, and freight infrastructure to
17 accommodate 21st century cargo, reduce air and water pollution, and create and maintain high-
18 quality, good-paying jobs. We will increase demand for American-made ships by ensuring U.S.
19 cargo is carried on ships flying our flag. We will make sure that every community in America
20 has access to clean, reliable drinking water and safe wastewater systems in their homes,
21 including by replacing dangerous lead pipes. We will increase investment in innovative water
22 technologies, including water use efficiency, water conservation, and water reuse and recycling,
23 that reduce water waste and consumer bills. We will modernize and green our public schools,
24 and ensure they are accessible to students with disabilities. And Democrats will close the digital
25 divide that deprives more than 20 million Americans of high-speed internet access by investing
26 in broadband and 5G technology, including rural and municipal broadband, and restoring the
27 FCC's authority to take strong enforcement action against internet service providers who violate
28 net neutrality principles.

29
30 All federally supported infrastructure projects, whether financed through grants, loans, or tax
31 incentives, should create good, union jobs that expand the middle class. That is why Democrats
32 will ensure labor protections, Davis-Bacon wage standards, project labor agreements, and
33 domestic sourcing requirements are included in any infrastructure legislation, and will block
34 anti-worker provisions, including forced arbitration. Democrats support transparent, accountable,
35 and sound management of publicly owned infrastructure and assets, and will ensure that local
36 jurisdictions are adequately protected from partisan power grabs seeking to strip them of those
37 assets. We will ensure robust federal oversight of any proposed transfers of ownership or
38 operations.

39
40 Democrats believe more products in our homes, stores, workplaces, and communities should be
41 stamped "Made in America" and will expand support for American manufacturing. We will end
42 policies that incentivize offshoring, and instead accelerate onshoring of critical supply chains,
43 including in medical supplies and pharmaceuticals. We will expand effective tax credits that
44 support domestic manufacturing and grow rural manufacturing jobs through investments in bio-
45 based manufacturing. We will invest in innovation hubs and government programs to provide
46 small manufacturers with technical and business expertise so they can grow their revenues and

1 their workforces. Democrats support robust Buy America and Buy Clean standards for federally
2 supported projects, which help increase demand for domestically produced and low-pollution
3 raw materials.

4
5 To ensure all workers can access the good jobs that will be created and supported by these
6 investments and build a diverse pipeline of talent across the economy, Democrats will invest in
7 career and technical education and high-quality job training programs with formal worker
8 representation in program development, including pre-apprenticeship opportunities and
9 registered apprenticeships. We believe in the value of lifelong learning, and will increase
10 investments to support adult literacy and other skills development programs.

11
12 Democrats know that small businesses are among the best job creators in our country. We will
13 significantly boost funding for state small business grant and lending initiatives that generate
14 tens of billions of dollars of private-sector investment, especially for small businesses owned by
15 women and people of color. We will increase access to credit for small businesses in low-income
16 and rural areas, including for unbanked or underbanked businesses. And we will increase
17 funding for programs supporting businesses owned by women and people of color, including
18 ending the Trump Administration's effort to starve the Minority Business Development Agency,
19 improving and expanding Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that most effectively
20 support women- and minority-owned businesses, and increasing opportunities for women- and
21 minority-owned businesses to obtain or participate in federal contracts.

22
23 Democrats will invest in the American heartland and rural communities. We will make it easier
24 for new and beginning farmers, ranchers, and foresters, including returning veterans, to start and
25 grow their operations by expanding U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ownership and
26 operating loan programs. Recognizing the history of racial discrimination in USDA's core
27 farming programs, Democrats will continue the reform efforts started under the Obama-Biden
28 Administration to ensure USDA takes a more proactive approach to supporting training and
29 resources for farmers of color. We will protect family farms and promote food security,
30 including by taking steps to limit foreign ownership of U.S. farmland and reforming agricultural
31 subsidies to better support small- and mid-sized farms. Democrats believe farmers should have
32 the right to repair their own farming equipment, rather than being forced to rely on large
33 corporations for even the simplest fixes. And we will expand domestic markets for family
34 farmers and ranchers by developing and growing regional food systems to deliver fresh,
35 American-grown produce to schools, hospitals, Department of Defense installations, and other
36 major public institutions, so small, mid-size, and traditional farmers can stay competitive.

37
38 Democrats will partner with America's farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners to make the
39 U.S. agriculture sector the first in the world to achieve net-zero emissions, which will spark a
40 revolution in agriculture and open up new revenue streams for farmers in energy and waste
41 products, and grow bio-based manufacturing jobs. We will grow the nation's biofuels
42 manufacturing sector, including by strengthening the Renewable Fuel Standard, supporting E15
43 blends, and supporting research, development, and deployment of advanced biofuels. We will
44 expand popular, voluntary programs for sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices that
45 help protect clean air and water and support wildlife habitats.

46

1 America's farmworkers are essential to our economy, our communities, and our security. We
2 will enforce labor and environmental protections for farmworkers, including overtime and safety
3 rules protecting workers from exposure to pesticides and extreme heat, and ensure farmworkers
4 are able to exercise their right to bargain collectively. Democrats will empower small and mid-
5 size family farms by tackling market concentration in agriculture, including by strengthening
6 enforcement of the Sherman and Clayton Antitrust Acts and the Packers and Stockyards Act.
7

8 The United States has long been a world leader in science, technology, research, and innovation.
9 Democrats oppose the Trump Administration's efforts to undermine federal scientific research
10 institutions, apply political screens to research grants, and interfere with the work of career
11 scientists—actions which have a chilling effect on scientific discovery and are damaging to
12 America's economic competitiveness. Democrats will support historic federal investments in
13 research, development, demonstration, and deployment, which will break new frontiers of
14 science and create jobs across the country in aerospace, artificial intelligence, advanced
15 materials, biotechnology, and clean energy and clean vehicles.
16

17 Democrats continue to support the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and
18 are committed to continuing space exploration and discovery. We believe in continuing the spirit
19 of discovery that has animated NASA's human space exploration, in addition to its scientific and
20 medical research, technological innovation, and educational mission that allows us to better
21 understand our own planet and place in the universe. We will strengthen support for the United
22 States' role in space through our continued presence on the International Space Station, working
23 in partnership with the international community to continue scientific and medical innovation.
24 We support NASA's work to return Americans to the moon and go beyond to Mars, taking the
25 next step in exploring our solar system. Democrats additionally support strengthening NASA and
26 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Earth observation missions to better
27 understand how climate change is impacting our home planet.
28

29 *Building A Fair System of International Trade for Our Workers*

30

31 For too long, the global trading system has failed to keep its promises to American workers. Too
32 many corporations have rushed to outsource jobs, and too many countries have broken their
33 promises to be honest and transparent partners. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the risks of
34 relying too heavily on global supply chains, as shutdowns and shortages have created chaos for
35 workers and consumers and made our public health response even more challenging. The Trump
36 Administration has failed time after time to deliver for American workers on this crucial issue,
37 siding with corporate interests over our workers and launching a trade war with China that they
38 have no plan for winning—creating incredible hardship for American farmers, manufacturers,
39 workers, and consumers in the process.
40

41 Democrats will pursue a trade policy that puts workers first. We will negotiate strong and
42 enforceable standards for labor, human rights, and the environment in the core text of our trade
43 deals. Future trade agreements should build on the pro-labor provisions added to the United
44 States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) by Democratic members of Congress.
45

1 Democrats will take aggressive action against China or any other country that tries to undercut
2 American manufacturing by manipulating their currencies and maintaining a misaligned
3 exchange rate with the dollar, dumping products like steel and aluminum in our markets, or
4 providing unfair subsidies. Unlike President Trump, we will stand up to efforts from China and
5 other state actors to steal America's intellectual property and will demand China and other
6 countries cease and desist from conducting cyberespionage against our companies.

7
8 We will eliminate President Trump's tax and trade policies that encourage big corporations to
9 ship jobs overseas and evade paying their fair share of taxes. If companies shut down their
10 operations here and outsource jobs, we'll claw back any public investments or benefits they
11 received from taxpayers. And we will take immediate action to repair the damage President
12 Trump's reckless policies have done to American farmers, by working with our allies to stand up
13 to China and negotiate from the strongest possible position.

14 Putting Homeownership in Reach and Guaranteeing Safe Housing for Every American

15
16 Homeownership is at the center of the American Dream—and yet it has never been in reach for
17 all. Decades of red-lining, rising income inequality, and predatory lending practices targeting
18 low-income families and people of color have made homeownership all but impossible for
19 millions of working families. Homeownership has long been central to building generational
20 wealth, and expanding access to homeownership to those who have been unfairly excluded and
21 discriminated against is critical to closing the racial wealth gap. We have a nationwide shortage
22 of affordable housing units, and tens of millions of Americans live in homes that pose risks to
23 their health and safety. Homelessness has reached crisis proportions in a growing number of
24 states, and housing costs that rise faster than wages have put the squeeze on renters in many of
25 our biggest cities.

26
27
28 Housing in America should be stable, accessible, safe, healthy, energy efficient, and, above all,
29 affordable. No one should have to spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing, so
30 families have ample resources left to meet their other needs and save for retirement.

31
32 Democrats believe the government should take aggressive steps to increase the supply of
33 housing, especially affordable housing, and address long-standing economic and racial inequities
34 in our housing markets. We will equalize access to affordable credit and improve access to down
35 payment assistance to help families of color, low-income families, and rural buyers purchase
36 homes. We will create a new tax credit of up to \$15,000 to help first-time homebuyers, and will
37 make the tax credit refundable and advanceable, so buyers can get assistance at the time of
38 purchase, instead of having to wait until they file their taxes.

39
40 Democrats will supercharge investment in the Housing Trust Fund to greatly expand the number
41 of affordable, accessible housing units on the market. We will expand the Low-Income Housing
42 Tax Credit to incentivize private-sector construction of affordable housing, and make sure urban,
43 suburban, and rural areas all benefit. We will make energy efficiency upgrades for millions of
44 low-income households, affordable housing units, and public housing units in metropolitan and
45 rural areas to save families money on their energy bills and provide safe and healthy homes. And
46 Democrats will leverage existing programs, including at USDA, to build more affordable,

1 accessible housing and retrofit existing housing in rural areas. We will ensure all federally
2 supported housing projects, from new builds to retrofits, include mandatory requirements for
3 labor standards, accessibility, and civil rights protections.
4

5 Democrats are committed to ending homelessness in America. Democrats commit to providing
6 Section 8 housing support for every eligible family, and will enact protections to keep landlords
7 from discriminating against voucher recipients. We will increase investments in public housing
8 to expand availability for the first time since the 1990s, and improve and upgrade existing public
9 housing to ensure safe living conditions for residents, protecting tenants' rights to return if
10 extensive renovations are needed. Democrats support a housing-first approach to ending
11 homelessness, because having a stable and safe place to live is essential to helping a person
12 tackle any other challenges they may face, from mental illness to substance use disorders to post-
13 traumatic stress disorder. We will act swiftly to end homelessness among veterans and will enact
14 strong protections for LGBTQ+ youth, especially Black, Latino, and Native American LGBTQ+
15 youth, who too often find themselves on the streets.
16

17 Democrats will enact a new Homeowner and Renter Bill of Rights to protect families from
18 abusive lenders and landlords. We will empower renters by working to establish a national tenant
19 right to organize, and support outreach and education to help tenants advocate to preserve and
20 expand affordable housing. And Democrats will provide legal support to fight wrongful
21 evictions.
22

23 America's history of using public policy and private lending restrictions to close neighborhoods
24 off to Black families and other people of color and strip equity from their communities is long,
25 painful, and unresolved to this day. The Trump Administration has made matters worse by
26 gutting fair lending and fair housing protections for homeowners. Democrats will vigorously
27 enforce the Fair Housing Act, the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, the Affirmatively Furthering
28 Fair Housing rule, and the disparate impact standard, and hold lenders accountable for
29 discriminatory practices. We will use the federal government to enforce settlements against
30 discriminatory lenders, and require communities to proactively review housing patterns and
31 remedy local policies that have a discriminatory effect. Democrats will give local elected
32 officials tools and resources to combat gentrification, penalize predatory lending practices, and
33 maintain homeownership, including exploring targeted rental relief when exorbitant rent
34 increases force long-term residents from their communities and tackling persistent racial bias in
35 appraisals that contributes to the racial wealth gap.
36

37 Leveling the Economic Playing Field 38

39 The U.S. economy is rigged against the American people. Time after time, President Trump and
40 the Republicans have rewarded big corporations and their wealthy donors, and left working
41 families behind. Democrats will take decisive action to level the playing field for people of color,
42 working families, women, and others who have been left on the sidelines.
43

44 *Reforming the Tax Code to Benefit Working Families* 45

1 Our tax system has been rigged against the American people by big corporations and their
2 lobbyists, and by Republican politicians who dole out tax cuts to their biggest donors while
3 leaving working families to struggle.
4

5 Democrats will take action to reverse the Trump Administration’s tax cuts benefiting the
6 wealthiest Americans and rewarding corporations for shipping American jobs overseas. We will
7 crack down on overseas tax havens and close loopholes that are exploited by the wealthiest
8 Americans and biggest corporations. We will make sure the wealthy pay their fair share in taxes.
9 We will make sure investors pay the same tax rates as workers and bring an end to expensive and
10 unproductive tax loopholes, including the carried interest loophole. Corporate tax rates, which
11 were cut sharply by the 2017 Republican tax cut, must be raised, and “trickle-down” tax cuts
12 must be rejected. Estate taxes should also be raised back to the historical norm.
13

14 Democrats will reform the tax code to be more progressive and equitable, and reduce barriers for
15 working families to benefit from targeted tax breaks, including the Earned Income Tax Credit
16 and the Child Tax Credit. Our program of reform will provide immediate, marked relief for
17 working families, including more generous, refundable tax credits to benefit low- and middle-
18 income families, and easier and more equitable access to tax provisions that help working
19 families build wealth, including by equalizing tax benefits for retirement contributions and
20 providing more accessible tax breaks for homeownership.
21

22 *Curbing Wall Street Abuses*

23

24 The scars of the financial crisis that triggered the Great Recession are still present in our
25 economy and our society. Banks should never be “too big to fail.” Democrats will work to
26 reverse the over-financialization of the American economy and curb Wall Street speculation by
27 maintaining and expanding safeguards that separate retail banking institutions from more risky
28 investment operations, and ensuring Wall Street investors pay their fair share in taxes.
29

30 We will strengthen and enforce the Obama-Biden Administration’s Dodd-Frank financial reform
31 law, including the Volcker Rule, to protect American workers from the impacts of future
32 financial crises, and will support an updated and modernized version of Glass-Steagall. And
33 when justified by the law, we will back criminal penalties for reckless executives who illegally
34 gamble with the savings and economic security of their clients and American communities.
35

36 Democrats will expand access to credit by creating a public credit reporting agency to provide a
37 non-discriminatory credit reporting alternative to the private agencies, and will require its use by
38 all federal lending programs, including home lending and student loans. And we will strengthen
39 banking regulations, including the Community Reinvestment Act, to ensure equitable access to
40 credit and banking products for all Americans, and reinvigorate the Consumer Financial
41 Protection Bureau (CFPB) to ensure that banks and lenders cannot prey on consumers.
42

43 *Ending Poverty*

44

45 Democrats remain committed to ending poverty and enabling all Americans to live up to their
46 God-given potential. We recognize that the official poverty rate, as measured and communicated

1 by the federal government, fails to capture critical needs like housing, education, health care,
2 transportation, energy, and other necessities, and therefore understates the true share of
3 Americans living in poverty. We will support the 10-20-30 funding approach, to direct at least 10
4 percent of federal funding to communities where 20 percent or more of the population has been
5 living below the poverty line for 30 years or longer. Directing more federal investment to the
6 communities most in need will help create jobs; improve and expand housing; modernize and
7 expand transportation, clean water, wastewater, energy, and broadband infrastructure; and
8 promote shared prosperity.

9
10 We will raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and guarantee equal pay for women, two
11 measures that in combination will pull millions of families out of poverty. We will make it easier
12 for working families to benefit from targeted tax breaks, including the Earned Income Tax Credit
13 and the Child Tax Credit, which too often go unclaimed by the lowest-income tax filers. We will
14 significantly expand affordable housing and build new public housing for the first time since the
15 1990s, and guarantee Section 8 benefits to all who qualify—all of which will help reduce
16 housing costs and increase housing availability for low-income families.

17
18 Democrats believe health care is a human right. We will incentivize states to expand Medicaid
19 and enroll low-income people who do not otherwise have health insurance in a new, high-quality
20 public option without premiums. We will double investments in community health centers and
21 rural health centers, and expand mobile health units, to make it easier for low-income people to
22 access health care.

23
24 In the wealthiest country on earth, it is a moral abomination that any child could ever go to bed
25 hungry. Democrats will increase funding for food assistance programs, including SNAP, WIC,
26 and school meals. We will also remove barriers that keep the formerly incarcerated from
27 accessing food assistance.

28
29 Democrats will provide substantially higher levels of support for programs and institutions that
30 boost economic development in America's most impoverished communities, including by
31 doubling funding for CDFIs, expanding the Community Development Block Grant, increasing
32 the number of Rural Business Investment Companies, and expanding and making permanent the
33 New Markets Tax Credit.

34
35 One in four American households are either unbanked or underbanked, putting them at risk of
36 losing money due to exorbitant fees or usurious interest rates. Democrats will support and
37 encourage efforts in Congress to guarantee affordable, transparent, and trustworthy banking
38 services for low- and middle-income families, including bank accounts and real-time payment
39 systems through the Federal Reserve and easily accessible service locations, like postal banking.

40 41 *Protecting Consumer Rights and Privacy*

42
43 Consumers, workers, students, retirees, and investors who have been mistreated by businesses
44 should never be denied their right to fight for fair treatment under the law. Democrats will
45 support efforts to eliminate the use of forced arbitration clauses in employment and service

1 contracts, which unfairly strip consumers, workers, students, retirees, and investors of their right
2 to their day in court.

3
4 In the 21st century—and especially in the COVID-19 pandemic—it is all but impossible for
5 consumers, students, and workers to opt out of using the internet to shop, socialize, learn, work,
6 bank, and live. Democrats are committed to policies that will protect individuals’ privacy and
7 data rights while continuing to support and enable innovation in the technology sector. We will
8 update the Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights proposed by the Obama-Biden Administration,
9 including adding strong national standards to protect consumers, employees, patients, and
10 students from data breaches, and work with Congress to pass it into law. Democrats will take
11 additional steps to protect student data privacy, particularly in preschool and K-12 settings where
12 most students are under 18, and ensure that data collected in schools is used only for education,
13 not for commercial purposes. And we support updating the Electronic Communications Privacy
14 Act, which has not been significantly amended since the 1980s, to afford the same protections to
15 digital content as physical content.

16 *Tackling Runaway Corporate Concentration*

17
18
19 Democrats are concerned that the increase in corporate concentration across a wide range of
20 industries, from hospitals and pharmaceutical companies to agribusiness and retail chains, could
21 be stifling competition and innovation and creating monopoly conditions that harm consumers.
22 We will direct federal regulators to review a subset of the mergers and acquisitions that have
23 taken place since President Trump took office, prioritizing the pharmaceutical, health care,
24 telecommunications, and agricultural industries, to assess whether any have increased market
25 concentration, raised consumer prices, demonstrably harmed workers, increased racial
26 inequality, reduced competition, or constricted innovation, and assign appropriate remedies.
27 Democrats will direct regulators to consider potential effects of future mergers on the labor
28 market, on low-income and marginalized communities, and on racial equity, as well as on
29 consumer prices and market competition. And as a last resort, regulators should consider
30 breaking up corporations if they find they are using their market power to engage in anti-
31 competitive activities.

32 Guaranteeing a Secure and Dignified Retirement

33
34
35 Democrats are proud to be the party that advocates retirement security for all. We are the party
36 that created and strengthened Social Security, and defended public and private retirement plans
37 that provide a decent monthly income. And we are fighting to make sure that all workers have
38 the ability to save at work for emergencies and for retirement.

39
40 Social Security is the most enduring thread in our nation’s social safety net. We will enact
41 policies to make Social Security more progressive, including increasing benefits for all
42 beneficiaries, meaningfully increasing minimum benefit payments, increasing benefits for long-
43 duration beneficiaries, and protecting surviving spouses from benefit cuts. We will eliminate
44 penalties that unfairly reduce public sector workers’ earned Social Security benefits. In light of
45 weakened retirement security for unpaid caregivers and caregivers for family members, who
46 sacrifice not only wages but Social Security benefits when they swap paid labor for unpaid care

1 work, Democrats support Social Security reform which better accounts for the challenges facing
2 unpaid caregivers—including incremental reforms to the benefit formula to mitigate the penalty
3 for unpaid care.
4

5 Democrats will reject every effort to cut, privatize, or weaken Social Security, including attempts
6 to raise the retirement age, diminish benefits by cutting cost-of-living adjustments, or reduce
7 earned benefits. We will ensure Social Security will be there forever.
8

9 Democrats will protect Americans’ retirement security, especially in the midst of the COVID-19
10 pandemic, and take action to protect public and private pensions to ensure workers keep the
11 benefits they have earned, including through multiemployer plans. We support amending federal
12 bankruptcy laws to protect workers’ earned pensions from being taken away by employers going
13 through bankruptcy.
14

15 We will also make it easier to save for retirement beyond core Social Security programs. We will
16 support approaches to retirement saving that enable workers and retirees to prepare for and
17 prosper in retirement, including reforms that will allow states and municipalities to create public
18 individual and pooled retirement account options that are easy for workers to access and
19 understand. We will advocate federal legislation to make it easy for all workers to save, not just
20 those in states or municipalities that have established their own programs. Democrats believe that
21 when workers are saving for retirement, the financial advisors they consult should be legally
22 obligated to put their client's best interests first. We will take immediate action to reverse the
23 Trump Administration's regulations allowing financial advisors to prioritize their self-interest
24 over their clients' financial wellbeing. And Democrats will equalize the network of retirement
25 savings tax breaks so that working people can build their nest eggs faster, while also providing
26 more equitable access to these accounts through automatic enrollment and relaxed contribution
27 restrictions for unpaid caregivers.
28
29
30

31 **ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL, AFFORDABLE, QUALITY HEALTH CARE**

32
33 Democrats have fought to achieve universal health care for a century. We are proud to be the
34 party of Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act. Because of the Obama-Biden
35 Administration and the Affordable Care Act, more than 100 million Americans with pre-existing
36 conditions, from heart disease to asthma, are secure in the knowledge that insurance companies
37 can no longer discriminate against them. Women can no longer be charged more than men just
38 because of their gender. And more Americans are able to get health coverage than ever before.
39

40 Democrats will keep up the fight until all Americans can access secure, affordable, high-quality
41 health insurance—because as Democrats, we fundamentally believe health care is a right for all,
42 not a privilege for the few.
43

44 Unfortunately, at every turn, Democrats’ efforts to guarantee health coverage have been met by
45 obstruction and opposition from the Republican Party. It has been Republicans who have
46 embraced junk plans that undermine protections for pre-existing conditions. It was Republican

1 state attorneys general who sued to block Medicaid expansion and Republican governors who
2 refused to extend Medicaid coverage to their citizens, leaving millions of low-income
3 Americans, disproportionately people of color, unable to access health coverage. And in the
4 midst of the worst global pandemic in generations—one that has left more than 140,000
5 Americans dead—the Trump Administration is fighting in court to invalidate the entirety of the
6 Affordable Care Act and eliminate insurance for tens of millions of people. Overturning the
7 Affordable Care Act remains a central plank of the Republican Party platform. The difference in
8 values between the two parties on this life-or-death issue could not be more stark.

9
10 The COVID-19 pandemic has made this difference in values painfully, brutally clear. President
11 Trump has repeatedly downplayed the threat of the coronavirus, bullied governors for enacting
12 life-saving public health measures, and left our frontline health care heroes without the
13 equipment they need to protect themselves and the American people. The burdens of this
14 pandemic have not been borne equally, as communities of color have suffered higher rates of
15 infection and death, and struggled to access life-saving care when they need it most. Our
16 essential workers have been deemed expendable by the President and his Administration.

17
18 As Democrats, we say with one voice: no more.

19
20 We are going to at last build the health care system the American people have always deserved:
21 one that finally provides universal health care coverage; reduces prescription drug prices,
22 premiums, and out-of-pocket costs; reins in overall health care expenses; and tackles the deep-
23 seated inequities in our health care system. We will build a health care system that is driven by
24 the needs of patients and the people who care for them, instead of the profit motives of
25 corporations. We will tackle entrenched racial disparities in health care, reduce prescription drug
26 prices by standing up to big pharmaceutical companies, and make it easier to access mental
27 health and substance use disorder treatment and long-term services and supports in metropolitan
28 and rural areas alike.

29
30 Democrats will always fight to save Americans' lives by making it easier and more affordable to
31 go to the doctor, get prescription medicines, and access preventive testing and treatments.

32
33 Generations of Democrats have been united in the fight for universal health care. We are proud
34 our party welcomes advocates who want to build on and strengthen the Affordable Care Act and
35 those who support a Medicare for All approach; all are critical to ensuring that health care is a
36 human right.

37 38 Securing Universal Health Care Through a Public Option

39
40 Democrats believe we need to protect, strengthen, and build upon our bedrock health care
41 programs, including the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Veterans Affairs
42 (VA) system. Private insurers need real competition to ensure they have incentive to provide
43 affordable, quality coverage to every American.

44
45 To achieve that objective, we will give all Americans the choice to select a high-quality,
46 affordable public option through the Affordable Care Act marketplace. The public option will

1 provide at least one plan choice without deductibles; will be administered by CMS, not private
2 companies; and will cover all primary care without any co-payments and control costs for other
3 treatments by negotiating prices with doctors and hospitals, just like Medicare does on behalf of
4 older people.

5
6 Everyone will be eligible to choose the public option or another Affordable Care Act
7 marketplace plan. To help close the persistent racial gap in insurance rates, Democrats will
8 expand funding for Affordable Care Act outreach and enrollment programs, so every American
9 knows their options for securing quality, affordable coverage.

10
11 The lowest-income Americans, including more than four million adults who should be eligible
12 for Medicaid but who live in states where Republican governors have refused to expand the
13 program, will be automatically enrolled in the public option without premiums; they may opt out
14 at any time. And we will enable millions of older workers to choose between their employer-
15 provided plans, the public option, or enrolling in Medicare when they turn 60, instead of having
16 to wait until they are 65.

17
18 Democrats will also empower the states, as laboratories of democracy, to use Affordable Care
19 Act innovation waivers to develop locally tailored approaches to health coverage, including by
20 removing barriers to states that seek to experiment with statewide universal health care
21 approaches.

22
23 We also know that finally covering every American through the public and private insurance
24 system alone is not enough to guarantee universal access. That is why Democrats support
25 doubling investments in community health centers and rural health clinics, including increased
26 support for dental care, mental health care, and substance use services like medication-assisted
27 treatment, and why we will increase support for mobile health clinics. We will enact longer,
28 multi-year funding cycles for these critical health services so they can operate with greater
29 certainty, and will leverage innovative payment options through Medicare and Medicaid to help
30 rural health clinics keep their doors open. We will expand the National Health Service Corps to
31 address critical shortages of health care providers in rural areas, including primary care nurses,
32 dental professionals, and mental health and substance use counselors.

33 34 Bringing Down Drug Prices and Taking on the Pharmaceutical Industry

35
36 Too many Americans struggle to afford the prescription drugs they need to get or stay healthy.
37 No American should find themselves foregoing or rationing medications because they can't
38 afford to pay—especially when taxpayer money underwrites research leading to the development
39 of many prescription drugs in the first place.

40
41 Democrats will take aggressive action to ensure that Americans do not pay more for prescription
42 drugs than people in other advanced economies. We will empower Medicare to at last be able to
43 negotiate prescription drug prices for all public and private purchasers—for families and
44 businesses, as well as older Americans—no matter where they get their coverage. We will also
45 prevent the price of brand-name and outlier generic drugs from rising faster than the inflation

1 rate. We will cap out-of-pocket drug costs for seniors, and ensure that effective treatments for
2 chronic health conditions are available at little or no cost.

3
4 For too long, prescription drug companies have gamed the system to justify their price increases
5 by any means available. Democrats will crack down on anti-competitive efforts to manipulate the
6 patent system or collude on prices. And we will eliminate tax breaks for prescription drug
7 advertisements.

8 9 Reducing Health Care Costs and Improving Health Care Quality

10
11 The United States spends more per capita on health care than any other advanced economy, and
12 has less to show for it. Health care costs have been increasing for decades, with average
13 premiums for an employer-provided family plan topping \$20,000 in 2019. Democrats know we
14 can reduce out-of-pocket costs for families while improving the quality of health care for all. We
15 will make it easier for working families to afford high-quality insurance in the Affordable Care
16 Act marketplaces by ensuring that no one pays more than 8.5 percent of their income in
17 premiums and eliminating the cap on subsidies.

18
19 Democrats believe that when Americans are in the hospital or an emergency room, they
20 shouldn't have to worry about whether their health care providers are in-network or not, which is
21 why we will outlaw the predatory practice of surprise medical billing. We will work to increase
22 price transparency in the health care system across all payers, and reduce paperwork through
23 uniform medical billing. And we will vigorously use antitrust laws to fight against mega-mergers
24 in the hospital, insurance, and pharmaceutical industries that would raise prices for patients by
25 undermining market competition.

26
27 Excessive prescription drug cost-sharing and voids in coverage such as dental, vision, and
28 hearing services can lead to severe health consequences for Medicare patients. Democrats will
29 fight any efforts to cut Medicare benefits, and support finding financially sustainable policies to
30 expand Medicare to cover dental, vision, and hearing.

31
32 Democrats will support policies that increase the number of primary care practitioners, registered
33 nurses, dentists, and dental therapists, especially in rural and low-income metropolitan areas, so
34 it's easier for every American to access preventive and primary health care.

35 36 *Expanding Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Treatment*

37
38 Every American who needs it should be able to access mental health care or substance use
39 disorder treatment, no matter where they live. Democrats will aggressively enforce the federal
40 mental health and substance use disorder parity law and ensure that health insurers adequately
41 cover mental health and substance use treatment. We will also invest in training and hiring more
42 mental health providers, substance use disorder counselors, and peer support counselors,
43 including by expanding funding for health clinics, especially in rural areas, and increasing access
44 to these services through Medicaid. Trauma has a profound effect on both mental and physical
45 health, and Democrats will support increased training for health care professionals, educators,

1 social workers, and other care workers in trauma-informed care and practices. We will oppose
2 efforts to weaken HIPAA and FERPA privacy rights of people with mental illness.

3
4 The opioid epidemic has devastated American communities, and the Trump Administration has
5 completely failed in its response, leaving millions of families desperate for help. Democrats will
6 make medication-assisted treatment available to all who need it, and will require publicly
7 supported health clinics to offer medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction and approved
8 treatments for other substance use disorders. We believe we must stop over-prescribing while
9 improving access to effective and needed pain management. Democrats recognize that
10 incarcerated people suffer from serious mental health and substance use disorders at higher rates
11 than the general population, which is why we will support expanded access to mental health and
12 substance use disorder care in prisons and for returning citizens. We will ensure no one is
13 incarcerated solely for drug use, and support increased use of drug courts, harm reduction
14 interventions, and treatment diversion programs for those struggling with substance use
15 disorders.

16 *Expanding Long-Term Care Services and Supports*

17
18
19 The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of people who reside in institutional
20 settings, such as nursing homes, and made clear that biases within Medicaid create undue
21 barriers to home- and community-based long-term services and supports. Democrats will work to
22 eliminate waiting lists for home and community-based care and the institutional bias within
23 Medicaid, making investments in building the capacity of the Medicaid system to provide home
24 and community-based services. We will also help Americans pay for long-term care by creating
25 a tax credit for informal and family caregivers and increasing the Child and Dependent Care Tax
26 Credit. Democrats will also pursue policies to improve nursing home staffing and quality
27 standards, strengthen accreditation processes, and combat corporate abuses in nursing homes.
28 And Democrats are strongly committed to protecting and enforcing the Americans with
29 Disabilities Act and fulfilling the promise of the *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision, which found
30 institutional segregation of people with disabilities to be unconstitutional.

31 Eliminate Racial, Gender, and Geographic Health Inequities

32
33
34 The national statistics on American health care mask profound disparities in insurance rates,
35 access to primary and specialized care, and disparate health outcomes, which are a symptom of
36 those disparities in access. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the uninsured rate was nearly
37 three times higher for Latinos and nearly twice as high for Black Americans as it was for whites.
38 Some segments of the Asian American and Pacific Islander population faced uninsured rates
39 rivaling those of Black Americans and Latinos, and more than one in five Native Americans and
40 Alaska Natives was uninsured. Black children are far more likely than white children to suffer
41 from asthma. Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Black
42 Americans are diagnosed with diabetes at higher rates than whites. And average life expectancy
43 is more than two years lower for rural Americans compared to those who live in metropolitan
44 areas.

1 We recognize it is not enough to have a commitment to eliminating health disparities: we must
2 have a plan. That is why Democrats will launch a sustained, government-wide effort, with
3 leadership at the highest levels, to eliminate racial, ethnic, gender, and geographic gaps in
4 insurance rates, access to quality care, and health outcomes. That includes tackling the social,
5 economic, and environmental inequities—the social determinants of health like poor housing,
6 hunger, inadequate transportation, mass incarceration, air and water pollution, and gun
7 violence—that contribute to worse health outcomes for low-income Americans and people of
8 color.

9
10 We can and must fix these inequities by expanding coverage, making health care more
11 affordable, and tackling implicit bias in our health care system. Democrats will ensure federal
12 data collection and analysis is adequately funded and designed to allow for disaggregation by
13 race, gender, geography, disability status, and other important variables, so that disparities in
14 health coverage, access, and outcomes can be better understood and addressed.

15
16 We will expand access to health care for people living and working across the United States by
17 extending Affordable Care Act coverage to Dreamers, and working with Congress to lift the
18 five-year waiting period for Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program eligibility for
19 low-income, lawfully present immigrants.

20
21 Democrats remain committed to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which disproportionately
22 affects communities of color and the LGBTQ+ community, and will support critical investments
23 under the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program and the Minority HIV/AIDS Fund.

24 25 *Protecting Native American Health*

26
27 Native American tribes have for too long been forced to cope with insufficient access to health
28 care and mental health services, nutrition services, and modern infrastructure. Democrats are
29 committed to pursuing environmental justice and climate justice, including for Indigenous
30 peoples and communities, and will invest significant new resources in clean water and
31 wastewater infrastructure, clean energy generation and distribution, and sustainable and
32 regenerative agriculture. And we will make mandatory and work toward full funding for the
33 Indian Health Service as part of our commitment to pursuing strong nation-to-nation
34 relationships and honoring the United States’ trust obligations to Native American communities.

35 36 *Securing Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice*

37
38 Like the majority of Americans, Democrats believe that every woman should be able to access
39 high-quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion. We will restore
40 federal funding for Planned Parenthood, which provides vital preventive and reproductive health
41 care for millions of women, especially low-income women and women of color, and LGBTQ+
42 people, including in underserved areas. Democrats oppose and will fight to overturn federal and
43 state laws that create barriers to women’s reproductive health and rights. We will repeal the
44 Hyde Amendment, and protect and codify *Roe v. Wade*.

1 We will address the discrimination and barriers that inhibit meaningful access to reproductive
2 health care services, including those based on gender, sexuality, race, income, disability, and
3 other factors. We recognize that quality, affordable comprehensive health care, evidence-based
4 sex education, and a full range of family planning services help reduce the number of unintended
5 pregnancies and thereby also reduce the need for abortions. We are proud to be the party of the
6 Affordable Care Act, which required insurers to cover prescription contraceptives at no cost to
7 women and has helped significantly reduce teen pregnancy rates.

8 9 *Protecting and Promoting Maternal Health*

10
11 Black women are more than three times as likely to die from complications of pregnancy and
12 childbirth compared to white women. To save mothers' lives, Democrats will expand postpartum
13 Medicaid coverage to a full year after giving birth, invest in rural maternal health, promote a
14 diverse perinatal workforce, and implement implicit bias training for health professionals. We
15 will support comprehensive solutions to address every dimension of the Black maternal health
16 crisis in America and eliminate all racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes, and
17 support policies and approaches that will at least halve our nation's unacceptably high maternal
18 mortality rate.

19 20 *Protecting LGBTQ+ Health*

21
22 We condemn the Trump Administration's discriminatory actions against the LGBTQ+
23 community, including the dangerous and unethical regulation allowing doctors, hospitals, and
24 insurance companies to discriminate against patients based on their sexual orientation or gender
25 identity. Democrats will reverse this rulemaking and restore nondiscrimination protections for
26 LGBTQ+ people in health insurance. We will also take action to guarantee that LGBTQ+ people
27 have full access to needed health care and resources, including by requiring that federal health
28 plans provide coverage for HIV/AIDS treatment and HIV prevention medications like PrEP and
29 PEP, gender confirmation surgery, and hormone therapy. Democrats will recommit the federal
30 government to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2025.

31 32 Strengthening and Supporting the Health Care Workforce

33
34 The COVID-19 pandemic has made plain to people across the country that our health care
35 workers are heroes. Our doctors and nurses, our home health aides and physician's assistants, our
36 public health professionals, our home care workers and nursing home workers, and our cleaners
37 and service workers have shown up to work every day despite dire shortages of personal
38 protective equipment. Far too many of them have lost their lives to this terrible disease, and
39 untold thousands are suffering the mental and emotional strain of losing far too many patients.
40 And yet, despite the critical role they play in our society and our economy, these frontline
41 workers are often underpaid and lack access to paid sick days, health insurance, and other
42 benefits critical for their own health and the health of patients.

43
44 Democrats believe that all jobs in the caring economy must come with family-sustaining wages,
45 good benefits, access to training and professional development, and the ability to join a union

1 and collectively bargain. We believe all employers funded by taxpayer dollars must pay their
2 workers at least \$15 an hour and protect workers' rights to organize.

3
4 Although health care jobs are among the fastest-growing in the economy, demand for services
5 still far outstrips supply, especially in primary care. We will invest in community health worker
6 care-forces around the nation proven to prevent, manage, and better treat chronic illnesses, and
7 empower first-time mothers with home visiting. We will close provider gaps and increase
8 diversity in the health care profession by creating a robust pipeline of talent with career ladders
9 for advancement. And we will also increase opportunities for community health workers to come
10 from the communities they serve.

11 Investing in Health Science and Research

12
13
14 Scientific research is at the heart of medicine—and of health care. Democrats want the United
15 States to be at the forefront of scientific research and discovery for the benefit of our people, our
16 economy, and our global competitiveness. We will support increased and sustainable funding for
17 health and medical research and federal grants across agencies, including at the National Cancer
18 Institute and other components of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the CDC, and the
19 Agency for Health Care Research and Quality. We will increase the federal investment in
20 research and development for new medications through the NIH, and make sure that there is a
21 return on that investment for taxpayers. We will also build on the foundation of the Obama-
22 Biden Administration's Cancer Moonshot to break down silos and accelerate research into
23 cancer and cancer treatments by creating an agency with the sole mission of finding new cures
24 and treatments for cancer and other diseases.

25
26 Democrats also support increasing funding for research into health disparities by race, gender,
27 age, geographic area, and socioeconomic status, with a particular focus on how the social
28 determinants of health contribute to differences in health outcomes. Democrats will take steps to
29 increase the diversity of principal investigators receiving federal grants, as well as of participants
30 in federally supported clinical trials, to improve the quality and applicability of our medical
31 research for women and people of color, who are too often left out of research on disease and
32 medical responses to treatment options.

33
34 The Trump Administration's systematic efforts to undermine, discredit, dismiss, fire,
35 disempower, and diminish the contributions of scientists, in health science and other disciplines,
36 have weakened our public institutions, slowed the pace of scientific inquiry, and profoundly
37 damaged America's standing in the world. Democrats will protect the independence and
38 intellectual freedom of scientists, whether they are employed by the federal government or
39 receiving federal grants in support of their research, and take steps to shield our scientific
40 research agencies from future political interference.

41
42
43
44

1 **PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AND BUILDING TRUST BY REFORMING OUR**
2 **CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM**
3

4 Our criminal justice system is failing to keep communities safe—and failing to deliver justice.
5 America is the land of the free, and yet more of our people are behind bars, per capita, than
6 anywhere else in the world. Instead of making evidence-based investments in education, jobs,
7 health care, and housing that are proven to keep communities safe and prevent crime from
8 occurring in the first place, our system has criminalized poverty, overpoliced and underserved
9 Black and brown communities, and cut public services. Instead of offering the incarcerated the
10 opportunity to turn their lives around, our prisons are overcrowded and continue to rely on
11 inhumane methods of punishment. Instead of treating those who have served their time as full
12 citizens upon their return to society, too many of our laws continue to punish the formerly
13 incarcerated, erecting barriers to housing, employment, and voting rights for millions of
14 Americans.

15
16 Democrats believe we need to overhaul the criminal justice system from top to bottom. Police
17 brutality is a stain on the soul of our nation. It is unacceptable that millions of people in our
18 country have good reason to fear they may lose their lives in a routine traffic stop, or while
19 standing on a street corner, or while playing with a toy in a public park. It is unacceptable that
20 Black parents must have “the talk” with their children, to try to protect them from the very police
21 officers who are supposed to be sworn to protect and serve them. It is unacceptable that more
22 than 1,000 people, a quarter of them Black, have been killed by police every year since 2015.
23 Democrats also recognize that all too often, systematic cuts to public services have left police
24 officers on the front lines of responding to social challenges for which they have not been
25 trained, from homelessness to mental health crises to the opioid epidemic. We can and must do
26 better for our communities.

27
28 Democrats know we can end the era of mass incarceration and dramatically reduce the number
29 of Americans held in jails and prisons while continuing to reduce crime rates, which have fallen
30 steadily from their peak nearly three decades ago. This is the moment to root out structural and
31 systemic racism in our criminal justice system and our society, and reimagine public safety for
32 the benefit of our people and the character of our country.

33
34 We must start by preventing people from entering the criminal justice system in the first place.
35 Democrats believe we must break the school-to-prison pipeline that sees children of color
36 arrested in their classrooms for misbehavior that ought to be handled in the principal’s office,
37 and build a school-to-opportunity pipeline instead. We support re-issuing federal guidance from
38 the Department of Education and the Department of Justice to prevent the disparate disciplinary
39 treatment of children of color in school and educational settings. Democrats believe every school
40 should have sufficient funding to employ guidance counselors, social workers, or school
41 psychologists to help guarantee age-appropriate and racially equitable student disciplinary
42 practices, rather than turning to police to resolve these issues.

43
44 A growing number of states have recognized it is unjust—and unjustifiable—to punish children
45 and teenagers as harshly as adults. We believe that if you aren’t old enough to drink, you aren’t
46 old enough to be sentenced to life without parole. The federal government will incentivize states

1 to stop incarcerating kids, and develop community-based alternatives to prison and detention
2 centers for youth and invest in after-school programs, community centers, and summer jobs to
3 provide opportunities for young people at risk. And Democrats believe that children who do
4 enter the juvenile justice system should be given a true second chance, including by
5 automatically sealing and expunging juvenile records.

6
7 Democrats believe we must ensure real accountability for individual and systemic misconduct in
8 our police departments, prevent law enforcement from becoming unnecessarily entangled in the
9 everyday lives of Americans, and reimagine policing for the benefit and safety of the American
10 people. In recent years, some innovative police departments have enacted evidence-based
11 reforms to change their approach by investing in robust training and putting in place—and, even
12 more crucially, enforcing—strong standards governing conflict resolution, de-escalation, and use
13 of force. We must build on these evidence-based approaches and implement them nationwide.

14
15 Democrats will establish strict national standards governing the use of force, including
16 permitting deadly force only when necessary and a last resort to prevent an imminent threat to
17 life. We will require immediate application of these standards to all federal law enforcement
18 agencies and condition federal grants on their adoption at the state and local level. We will
19 require officer training in effective nonviolent tactics, appropriate use of force, implicit bias, and
20 peer intervention, both at the academy and on the job. And we will ban racial and religious
21 profiling in law enforcement.

22
23 It is past time to end the failed “War on Drugs,” which has imprisoned millions of Americans—
24 disproportionately people of color—and hasn’t been effective in reducing drug use. Democrats
25 support policies that will reorient our public safety approach toward prevention, and away from
26 over-policing—including by making evidence-based investments in jobs, housing, education,
27 and the arts that will make our nation fairer, freer, and more prosperous.

28
29 Democrats will reinvigorate community policing approaches, so officers on the beat better serve
30 the neighborhoods they work in, and make smart investments to incentivize departments to build
31 effective partnerships with social workers and mental health and substance use counselors to
32 help respond to public health challenges. Body cameras are not a panacea, but Democrats believe
33 they can help improve accountability and transparency; we support their continued use and will
34 take steps to improve compliance, require their use in blended federal-local task forces, and
35 promulgate best practices to protect personal privacy. Democrats believe weapons of war have
36 no place on our streets, and will once again limit the sale and transfer of surplus military
37 weapons to domestic law enforcement agencies—a policy President Trump reversed
38 immediately upon taking office.

39
40 We cannot create trust without holding those in power accountable for their actions. Democrats
41 will reinvigorate pattern-or-practice investigations into police misconduct at the Department of
42 Justice, and strengthen them through new subpoena powers and expanded oversight to address
43 systemic misconduct by prosecutors. Far too often, the law has shielded police officers who
44 stand accused of heinous violations of civil and human rights. Democrats support lowering the
45 intent standard for federally prosecuting law enforcement officials for civil rights violations. We

1 will also act to ensure that victims of federal, state, or local law enforcement abuses of power can
2 seek justice through civil litigation by reining in the doctrine of qualified immunity.

3
4 The American people deserve access to timely and accurate data on activities supported by their
5 tax dollars, including policing. We will collect and publish data on the use of force in police
6 departments across the country to promote transparency and accountability. To increase
7 transparency and improve federal, state, and local law enforcement hiring practices, Democrats
8 will also establish a national registry of officers who have been found to have abused their
9 power.

10
11 Democrats also support measures to increase diversity among the ranks of police departments, so
12 our law enforcement agencies look more like the communities they serve. And we will seek
13 increased funding for officer health and well-being in police departments across the country,
14 including for personal safety equipment and mental health services.

15
16 Substance use disorders are diseases, not crimes. Democrats believe no one should be in prison
17 solely because they use drugs. Democrats will decriminalize marijuana use and reschedule it
18 through executive action on the federal level. We will support legalization of medical marijuana,
19 and believe states should be able to make their own decisions about recreational use. The Justice
20 Department should not launch federal prosecutions of conduct that is legal at the state level. All
21 past criminal convictions for cannabis use should be automatically expunged. And rather than
22 involving the criminal justice system, Democrats support increased use of drug courts, harm
23 reduction interventions, and treatment diversion programs for those struggling with substance
24 use disorders.

25
26 Poverty is not a crime, and it should not be treated as one. Democrats support eliminating the use
27 of cash bail and believe no one should be imprisoned merely for failing to pay fines or fees.
28 Equal justice under the law should not be contingent on the ability to pay for quality legal
29 representation, which is why we support increasing funding for public defenders and for the
30 Legal Services Corporation.

31
32 Sentencing decisions should be based on the facts of each case, including the severity of the
33 offense and individuals' circumstances. Democrats support allowing judges to determine
34 appropriate sentences, which is why we will fight to repeal federal mandatory minimums,
35 incentivize states to do the same, and make all sentencing reductions retroactive so judges can
36 reconsider past cases where their hands were tied. We believe it is long past time to end the
37 federal sentencing disparity between crack and powdered cocaine, which has contributed to the
38 disproportionate imprisonment of people of color. And Democrats continue to support abolishing
39 the death penalty.

40
41 Our courts should reflect our country. Democrats will appoint people to the bench who are
42 committed to seeing justice be served, and treating each case on its merits. We will nominate and
43 confirm federal judges who have diverse backgrounds and experiences, including as public
44 defenders, legal aid attorneys, and civil rights lawyers.

1 Democrats are proud that the Obama-Biden Administration commuted the sentences of more
2 than 1,700 people serving unjust sentences following thorough review of their individual cases,
3 and we support the continued use of the President’s clemency powers to secure the release of
4 those serving unduly long sentences. We denounce President Trump’s inappropriate use of
5 clemency to help his friends and political cronies avoid justice. We also support establishing an
6 independent clemency board to ensure an appropriate, effective process for using clemency,
7 especially to address systemic racism and other priorities.
8

9 Private profit should not motivate the provision of vital public services, including in the criminal
10 justice system. Democrats support ending the use of private prisons and private detention
11 centers, and will take steps to eliminate profiteering from diversion programs, commercial bail,
12 electronic monitoring, prison commissaries, and reentry and treatment programs. Democrats
13 believe prisoners should have a meaningful opportunity to challenge wrongful convictions and
14 unconstitutional conditions in prisons. We also believe that too many of our jails and prisons
15 subject people to inhumane treatment, and will work to end practices like solitary confinement
16 for adults and juveniles and ban the use of restraints on pregnant federal inmates. Incarcerated
17 people must not be denied access to vital medical care or unnecessarily exposed to disease, as
18 they have been during the COVID-19 pandemic. And Democrats will pursue a holistic approach
19 to rehabilitation, increasing support for programs that provide educational opportunities,
20 including pursuing college degrees, for those in the criminal justice system, both in prison and
21 upon release.
22

23 Democrats believe in redemption. We must deepen our commitment to helping those who have
24 served their time re-enter society, earn a good living, and participate in our democracy as the full
25 citizens they are. We will aim to ensure access to transitional housing for returning citizens,
26 support expanded access to mental health and substance use treatment, and will stop the practice
27 of reincarcerating people for technical violations of probation or parole. Democrats support
28 federal and state efforts to “ban the box” and will make it easier for returning citizens to access
29 work opportunities through the Job Corps. The formerly incarcerated should not be blocked from
30 exercising their voting rights or accessing public services, including Pell Grants and nutrition
31 assistance, available to other free citizens of the United States. Continuing to punish a person
32 after they have rejoined the community is both cruel and counterproductive.
33
34

35 **HEALING THE SOUL OF AMERICA**

36
37 Democrats believe in bringing the American people together, not stoking division and distrust.
38 President Trump has denigrated virtually every segment of American society—and in so doing,
39 he has insulted the very idea of America itself. Healing the soul of America means facing up to
40 the deepest inequities in our society, from structural racism to misogyny to discrimination
41 against people with disabilities, and enacting ambitious measures to fix them.
42

43 Protecting Americans’ Civil Rights

44
45 Democrats are committed to ending discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin,
46 language, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability status. We will appoint

1 U.S. Supreme Court justices and federal judges who look like America, are committed to the rule
2 of law, will uphold individual civil rights and civil liberties as essential components of a free and
3 democratic society, and will respect and enforce foundational precedents, including *Brown v.*
4 *Board of Education* and *Roe v. Wade*. Democrats are committed to restoring the full power of the
5 Voting Rights Act and ensuring every citizen can access the ballot box. We will enforce and
6 strengthen the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, and will end
7 racial and religious profiling in law enforcement.

8
9 President Trump’s words and actions have given safe harbor and encouragement to bigots, anti-
10 Semites, Islamophobes, and white supremacists. It’s time to root out domestic terrorism in all its
11 forms, and pass a domestic terrorism law that is consistent with the Constitutional right to free
12 speech and civil liberties.

13 14 Achieving Racial Justice and Equity

15
16 Historic wrongs and abuses perpetrated against Native Americans, two and a half centuries of
17 slavery, a hundred years of Jim Crow segregation, and a history of exclusionary immigration
18 policies have created profound and lasting inequities in income, wealth, education, employment,
19 housing, environmental quality, and health care for communities of color. Democrats are
20 committed to standing up to racism and bigotry in our laws, in our culture, in our politics, and in
21 our society, and recognize that race-neutral policies are not sufficient to rectify race-based
22 disparities. We will take a comprehensive approach to embed racial justice in every element of
23 our governing agenda, including in jobs and job creation, workforce and economic development,
24 small business and entrepreneurship, eliminating poverty and closing the racial wealth gap,
25 promoting asset building and homeownership, education, health care, criminal justice reform,
26 environmental justice, and voting rights.

27
28 Hate and its symbols have no home in America. Democrats believe that we can only build a
29 more just and equitable future if we honestly reckon with our history and its legacy in the
30 present. We support removing the Confederate battle flag and statues of Confederate leaders
31 from public properties. We recognize Black history has too often been intentionally suppressed
32 or excluded from our history books, and will invest in recovering, celebrating, and highlighting
33 Black history as American history.

34
35 We believe Black lives matter, and will establish a national commission to examine the lasting
36 economic effects of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and racially discriminatory federal policies
37 on income, wealth, educational, health, and employment outcomes; to pursue truth and promote
38 racial healing; and to study reparations. We must acknowledge that there can be no realization of
39 the American dream without grappling with the lasting effects of slavery, and facing up to the
40 centuries-long campaign of violence, fear, and trauma wrought upon Black Americans.

41
42 The extreme gap in household wealth and income between people of color—especially Black
43 Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans—and white families is hurting our working class and
44 holding our country back. Democrats are committed to improving economic mobility for people
45 of color. We will fight to tackle intergenerational poverty and close the racial wealth gap.

1 Democrats support policies to end discrimination and unfair practices in the housing market, will
2 empower local governments to combat gentrification trends that disproportionately harm long-
3 time residents of color, and will create a Community Restoration Fund to repair the toxic legacy
4 of historic investments in transportation that were designed to enforce racial segregation. We will
5 equalize access to credit and expand support for first-time homebuyers to make homeownership
6 and the wealth-building it creates more accessible for people of color.

7
8 Democrats recognize that racial wealth gaps are rooted in longstanding discrimination and unjust
9 policies. We will equalize established pathways for building wealth while exploring innovative
10 approaches to closing racial wealth gaps, including policies that provide seed capital in order to
11 access the economic security of asset ownership.

12
13 Unemployment rates for people of color are persistently higher than the national average, which
14 is why Democrats support making racial equity part of the mandate of the Federal Reserve.
15 Specifically, we will work with Congress to direct the Chair of the Federal Reserve to report on
16 the extent of racial employment and wage gaps, and how the central bank is countering them, in
17 addition to monitoring, reporting on, and responding to macroeconomic conditions in general.

18
19 We will invest in low-income communities, urban and rural areas, and communities of color by
20 strengthening the Community Reinvestment Act, improving federal support and access to credit
21 for women- and minority-owned small businesses, expanding and making permanent the New
22 Markets Tax Credit, and doubling funding for CDFIs.

23
24 We will restore and build on the Obama-Biden Administration's Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces
25 policy, and use the purchasing power of the federal government to incentivize private companies
26 to recruit and advance people of color, women, people with disabilities, and veterans.

27
28 Democrats believe it is unacceptable that schools are more segregated today than they were when
29 *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided nearly seven decades ago. We believe education is a
30 critical public good, and will increase investments to guarantee all students can access high-
31 quality public schools, no matter where they live. We will break the school-to-prison pipeline
32 that sees children of color disproportionately punished by the criminal justice system for
33 disciplinary issues that should be handled by school administrators or counselors.

34
35 The COVID-19 pandemic, which has disproportionately sickened and killed Black Americans,
36 Latinos, and Native Americans, has made long-standing racial and geographic disparities in
37 health care and health outcomes into front-page news. Democrats will launch an all-of-
38 government effort to eliminate health disparities, including by achieving universal health
39 coverage through a high-quality, affordable public option; expanding funding for community
40 health centers, rural health centers, and mobile health clinics; and tackling environmental racism
41 that sees communities of color disproportionately impacted by air pollution, water pollution, and
42 toxic chemicals.

43
44 All people in the United States should be able to easily access public services, and all citizens
45 should be able to exercise their Constitutional right to vote without facing unjust or
46 discriminatory barriers. Democrats will restore the full powers of the Voting Rights Act and go

1 further to roll back discriminatory policies that have been put in place in recent years to prevent
2 people of color from voting. We will ensure all federal agencies produce materials in languages
3 commonly spoken in the United States, including languages spoken by Asian American and
4 Pacific Islander communities, and that voting materials are also easily accessible for citizens
5 with limited English proficiency.

6 7 Protecting Women's Rights

8
9 Democrats will fight to guarantee equal rights for women, including by ratifying the Equal
10 Rights Amendment and at long last enshrining gender equality in the U.S. Constitution. We will
11 take aggressive action to end pay inequality, including by increasing penalties against companies
12 that discriminate against women and passing the Paycheck Fairness Act. Democrats are
13 committed to ending sexual assault, domestic abuse, and other violence against women,
14 including the epidemics of violence against Native American women and transgender women of
15 color.

16
17 Like the majority of Americans, Democrats believe every woman should be able to access high-
18 quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion. We oppose and will
19 fight to overturn federal and state laws that create barriers to women's reproductive health and
20 rights, including by repealing the Hyde Amendment and protecting and codifying *Roe v. Wade*.
21 And Democrats will take action to protect the rights of pregnant women in the workplace,
22 including by requiring employers to make reasonable accommodations for pregnant and
23 breastfeeding workers and those who have recently given birth and at last joining other advanced
24 economies by enacting universal paid family leave.

25 26 Protecting LGBTQ+ Rights

27
28 Democrats applaud this year's U.S. Supreme Court decision that made clear that employment
29 discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity violates the law, but we know we
30 still have work to do to ensure LGBTQ+ people are treated equally under the law and in our
31 society. We will fight to enact the Equality Act and at last outlaw discrimination against
32 LGBTQ+ people in housing, public accommodations, access to credit, education, jury service,
33 and federal programs. We will work to ensure LGBTQ+ people are not discriminated against
34 when seeking to adopt or foster children, protect LGBTQ+ children from bullying and assault,
35 and guarantee transgender students' access to facilities based on their gender identity.

36
37 Recognizing that LGBTQ+ youth and adults suffer disproportionately from mental health and
38 substance use disorders, Democrats will expand mental health and suicide prevention services,
39 and ban harmful "conversion therapy" practices. We will ensure that all transgender and non-
40 binary people can procure official government identification documents that accurately reflect
41 their gender identity.

42
43 Democrats are committed to ending the homelessness crisis, including among LGBTQ+ youth.
44 We will fight to end violence against transgender Americans and particularly against Black
45 transgender women, who are disproportionately victims of assault and homicide, and will
46 prioritize the investigation of hate crimes against transgender and non-binary people.

1
2 Protecting Disability Rights
3

4 One in four American adults live with a disability. Democrats believe people with disabilities
5 deserve to lead full, happy, and healthy lives. Democrats will fully enforce the Americans with
6 Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Civil
7 Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Mental Health
8 Parity and Addiction Equity Act, and the Help America Vote Act, among other bedrock statutes
9 protecting the rights of people with disabilities. We will oppose any efforts to weaken
10 enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will ensure non-discrimination in access
11 to health care, building on the protections for people with disabilities enshrined in the Affordable
12 Care Act. We will ensure every federal agency aggressively enforces the integration mandate
13 affirmed in the *Olmstead* decision, and repair the damage done by the Trump Administration.
14 We will rigorously enforce non-discrimination protections for people with disabilities in health
15 care, employment, education, and housing, and ensure equal access to the ballot box.
16

17 Democrats will phase out the subminimum wage, expand competitive, integrated employment
18 opportunities, and protect and strengthen economic security for people with disabilities. We will
19 take a holistic approach to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security
20 Disability Insurance (SSDI) programs that are essential for millions of Americans with
21 disabilities by increasing SSI benefits, eliminating waiting periods for SSDI, and eliminating the
22 “benefit cliff” for SSDI benefits. We will increase federal funding to expand accessible
23 transportation and accessible, integrated, and affordable housing. We will protect people with
24 disabilities in emergencies and meet the needs of travelers with disabilities. We will ensure new
25 technologies benefit, and are affordable and accessible for, people with disabilities. We will
26 expand access to tax-advantaged ABLE savings accounts, which provide people with disabilities
27 a way to pay for disability-related expenses like housing, education, and transportation. And
28 Democrats will improve access to home- and community-based care for people with disabilities
29 and older Americans, including by enforcing the Medicaid Home and Community-Based
30 Settings Rule, ending the institutional bias within Medicaid, and expanding the home care
31 workforce to end state waiting lists for long-term services and supports.
32

33 Honoring Indigenous Tribal Nations
34

35 The U.S. government has a profound legal and moral obligation toward Native American Tribes
36 and Indigenous communities—a trust which has been broken time and again, undermining Tribal
37 nations’ ability to flourish politically, culturally, and economically. Democrats are committed to
38 honoring, upholding, and strengthening the United States’ trust obligations to Tribal Nations and
39 communities, as enshrined in the Constitution, treaties, federal statutes, and case law.
40

41 Democrats recognize and support the sovereignty of Tribal Nations and pledge to work on a
42 nation-to-nation basis to empower Indigenous peoples, increase economic development in Tribal
43 Nations, and protect Tribal lands, assets, resources, and treaty rights. We honor and support the
44 great Indigenous traditions all across the country. We stand with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
45 and all Tribal Nations in rejecting the Trump Administration’s efforts to remove land that had
46 been put into trust by the Obama-Biden Administration. We will fight to enact a clean *Carcieri*

1 fix and support policies to restore Tribal lands, including culturally significant federal lands, by
2 moving land into trust, streamlining the land-into-trust process, and conducting land buy-backs.
3 We will also support establishment of additional federal co-management agreements with Tribal
4 Nations on federal lands that have cultural and historical significance to Tribes.

5
6 Democrats believe the federal government must commit to providing full funding to fulfill unmet
7 trust and treaty obligations to Tribal Nations and Native American peoples. We will work on a
8 nation-to-nation basis to increase funding, resources, and financial tools for Tribes, particularly
9 in the key areas of criminal justice, health care, education, housing, and economic development.
10 Democrats will work to address the predictability of funding for Tribes, and explore pathways
11 including mandatory funding, advanced appropriations, shutdown exemptions, and other
12 mechanisms.

13
14 The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated Indian Country, with some Tribal communities facing
15 among the highest per capita infection rates in the country. As part of our commitment to
16 fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, Democrats will support funding to hire sufficient staff to
17 conduct contact tracing for all who test positive for this deadly disease. We will surge funding to
18 the Indian Health Service and support investments to help Tribal governments address the
19 economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and President Trump's recession, including
20 investments to support and create jobs in Tribal communities and to support affordable child
21 care, so parents are not forced to choose between keeping their jobs and keeping their children
22 safe.

23
24 Democrats recognize that Tribal security is paramount, and will ensure that Tribal authorities
25 have the resources they need to investigate and prosecute crimes against Native peoples and
26 communities, including cooperation from law enforcement agencies outside Tribal lands. We
27 will fight for justice for missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Democrats will at
28 last reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, reaffirm provisions relating to Tribal
29 jurisdiction, and expand the list of crimes that can be prosecuted under the statute to include
30 stalking, child abuse, and trafficking. We also support Indian Tribal jurisdiction over Tribal lands
31 and we support further efforts to address the *Oliphant* decision. We will defend the Indian Child
32 Welfare Act and protect Native families and involve Tribes in child welfare cases. And we will
33 build on federal programs to reduce the disproportionate incarceration of American Indian and
34 Alaska Native men and women, reduce sentencing disparities, and work to ensure all returning
35 citizens have access to housing, employment services, and health care, including mental health
36 and substance use disorder treatment.

37
38 Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians are uninsured at higher rates and
39 suffer from disparities in health outcomes, including in the COVID-19 pandemic. Democrats will
40 make mandatory and work toward full funding for the Indian Health Service to help expand
41 access to health care in Tribal areas, including mental health, dental care, and substance use
42 disorder treatments, and will fully fund contract support costs. We will expand insurance
43 coverage for Native Americans no matter where they live by creating a high-quality, affordable
44 public option on the Affordable Care Act exchanges, and making the public option available
45 without premiums to low-income families.

46

1 We will invest in Indian education from early childhood through college and career education.
2 Democrats will significantly expand funding for the Bureau of Indian Education and invest in
3 improving public school buildings. We will increase resources for programs that promote
4 cultural preservation and enable Native students to learn their Indigenous languages, and support
5 national curricula to teach Native American history and culture in schools. Democrats will
6 increase recruitment of high-quality teachers and school professionals in Tribal areas. And we
7 will break down barriers that keep Native American students from accessing a college education,
8 including by making community colleges free and significantly increasing support to lower
9 attendance costs at Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). Democrats are committed to
10 reestablishing and strengthening the White House Generation Indigenous initiative and its annual
11 White House Tribal Youth Gathering to support Native youth. We are committed to combating
12 hurtful and racist Native American stereotypes in mainstream American culture, especially those
13 associated with sports teams and educational institutions.
14

15 Democrats will substantially increase investments to meet Tribal housing needs, including by
16 constructing and upgrading affordable housing on Tribal lands, investing in drinking and clean
17 water infrastructure, and investing in rural and Tribal broadband infrastructure. We will make
18 energy-saving upgrades to millions of low-income homes and affordable and public housing
19 units, and increase funding for the Indian Community Development Block Grant program.
20

21 We will unlock significant new resources for economic development on Tribal lands, including
22 supporting investments in clean energy, climate change resilience, and 21st century
23 infrastructure projects. We will expand access to capital for Tribes by increasing resources for
24 the Native American CDFI Assistance Program, expanding and making permanent the New
25 Markets Tax Credit, and expanding technical assistance to enable Tribes to better access existing
26 federal funding streams. We will continue to support and expand SBA programs for Tribes and
27 fully implement the Buy Indian Act. We will also support Tribal governments and their authority
28 to tax activities on their lands in support of Tribal self-sufficiency and government services.
29 Democrats are committed to environmental justice for Indian Country, and will work to ensure
30 all people have clean air, clean water, modern wastewater infrastructure, and can live without
31 exposure to toxic chemicals.
32

33 Democrats recognize that the Native American men and women who have proudly served in the
34 Armed Forces of the United States in all its wars, from the beginning of U.S. history, deserve the
35 total and unqualified support of their needs by the federal government. We will ensure that all
36 the benefits provided to U.S. military veterans are provided to Native veterans and fully funded
37 to meet the special cultural needs of Native veterans. Democrats will additionally establish a
38 Veterans Affairs Tribal Advisory Committee to foster improved collaboration and coordination
39 between the federal government and Tribal Nations on meeting the unique needs of Native
40 American veterans, and establish Tribal veteran service delivery programs in Tribal
41 communities.
42

43 Democrats commit to managing federal actions and undertakings in a manner that honors the
44 trust responsibility; respects the nation-to-nation relationship and sovereignty of Tribes; and
45 protects subsistence, treaty, and other reserved rights, natural and cultural resources, and sacred
46 sites of federally-recognized Indian Tribes. We commit to upholding leasing and rights-of-way

1 regulations that strengthen Tribal sovereignty and ensure Tribal consent on lands in which Tribes
2 hold an interest. We will create a more robust and meaningful consultation process that is
3 consistent across all federal agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget, and use
4 early and ongoing consultation to identify and work to appropriately mitigate or address
5 concerns.

6
7 Democrats recognize that self-governance and self-determination empowers Tribes to prioritize
8 their needs and plan for the future consistent with their distinct traditions, economies, and
9 institutions. Recognizing the success many Tribes have had with self-governance, we will work
10 to make it more effective within the Bureau of Indian Affairs and encourage other federal
11 agencies to negotiate such agreements with Tribes.

12
13 Consistent with the policies of the Obama-Biden Administration, Democrats will make
14 permanent the White House Council on Native American Affairs and commit to holding an
15 annual White House Tribal Nations Conference. We will nominate federal judges who
16 understand Indian law, and will ensure Native Americans and Alaska Natives are appointed to
17 high-level and leadership positions within the federal government.

18
19 Over 70 percent of Native Americans live off-reservation. Democrats will create a strategy to
20 support urban Indian populations and ensure their voices are heard and no one is left behind,
21 including by expanding support to access quality health care, culturally relevant education,
22 affordable housing, and other programs.

23
24 Democrats also support efforts for self-governance and self-determination of Native Hawaiians.
25 Native Hawaiians are the Indigenous, aboriginal people of Hawai'i whose values and culture are
26 the foundation of the Hawaiian Islands. We support proactive actions by the federal government
27 to enhance Native Hawaiian culture, health, language, and education. We recognize and honor
28 the contributions and sacrifices made in service to our country by Native Hawaiians.

29 30 Ending Violence Against Women

31
32 Democrats are committed to ending sexual assault, domestic abuse, and other violence against
33 women. We will act swiftly to overcome Republican obstructionism and reauthorize and expand
34 the Violence Against Women Act to better protect Native American women, women with
35 disabilities, children and young women, transgender women, and other groups who are
36 disproportionately affected by sexual assault and domestic abuse.

37
38 Democrats will expand services for survivors of violence against women, including by
39 expanding access to housing, legal assistance, and victim advocate services. We will support
40 danger assessment and lethality training for law enforcement officers and community partners to
41 help curb domestic violence homicides. We will work with Congress to make clear that Title IX
42 requires colleges, universities, and other educational institutions to properly investigate and take
43 action in cases of sexual assault. Democrats will increase resources to eliminate the national
44 backlog of untested rape kits so that more survivors can see justice be served. And we will
45 support federal and state legislative efforts to make "revenge porn" and other unauthorized
46 disclosures of intimate images a civil and criminal offense.

1
2 Ending the Epidemic of Gun Violence
3

4 Gun violence is a public health crisis in the United States. Nearly 40,000 people die annually
5 from guns—devastating countless families, friends, and communities. Addressing the gun
6 violence crisis requires supporting evidence-based programs that prevent gun deaths from
7 occurring in the first place, including by making mental health care more accessible, funding
8 interventions to reduce homicides and gun violence in neighborhoods, and strengthening
9 protections against domestic violence. Democrats will also ensure the Centers for Disease
10 Control and Prevention have sufficient resources to study gun violence as a public health issue.

11
12 Democrats will enact universal background checks, end online sales of guns and ammunition,
13 close dangerous loopholes that currently allow stalkers and some individuals convicted of assault
14 or battery to buy and possess firearms, and adequately fund the federal background check
15 system. We will close the “Charleston loophole” and prevent individuals who have been
16 convicted of hate crimes from possessing firearms. Democrats will ban the manufacture and sale
17 of assault weapons and high capacity magazines. We will incentivize states to enact licensing
18 requirements for owning firearms and “red flag” laws that allow courts to temporarily remove
19 guns from the possession of those who are a danger to themselves or others. We will pass
20 legislation requiring that guns be safely stored in homes. And Democrats believe that gun
21 companies should be held responsible for their products, just like any other business, and will
22 prioritize repealing the law that shields gun manufacturers from civil liability.

23
24 Supporting Faith and Service
25

26 Democrats celebrate America’s history of religious pluralism and tolerance, and recognize the
27 countless acts of service of our faith communities, as well as the paramount importance of
28 maintaining the separation between church and state enshrined in our Constitution.

29
30 During the Trump Administration, too many of our religious communities have been victimized
31 by acts of intolerance, bigotry, and violence. We will reject the Trump Administration’s use of
32 broad religious exemptions to allow businesses, medical providers, social service agencies, and
33 others to discriminate. Democrats will increase funding and support for security investments and
34 protection at houses of worship, because everyone should be able to pray without fear. We will
35 confront white nationalist terrorism and combat hate crimes perpetrated against religious
36 minorities. Democrats will also work to restore trust with our Muslim communities by ensuring
37 the government’s engagement is not discriminatory nor viewed through a security lens.

38
39 Supporting Press Freedom
40

41 The free press is essential to our free democracy. Democrats roundly reject President Trump’s
42 denigration of the free and independent press, which has endangered reporters’ lives, helped fuel
43 conspiracy theories, and deepened distrust between Americans and their government. Democrats
44 will appoint an independent media professional to head the U.S. Agency for Global Media, to
45 ensure that the news and information projected around the world by the federal government
46 meets the highest standards of fact-based and unbiased journalism. Democrats are concerned

1 about the potentially harmful effects of corporate consolidation in the media industry, including
2 in television, radio, and newspapers, and will reinstate and strengthen media ownership rules and
3 direct federal antitrust agencies to investigate the economic impacts of mergers in the media
4 industry.

5 6 7 **COMBATING THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND PURSUING ENVIRONMENTAL** 8 **JUSTICE** 9

10 Climate change is a global emergency. We have no time to waste in taking action to protect
11 Americans' lives and futures. The last four years have seen record-breaking storms, devastating
12 wildfires, and historic floods. Urban and rural communities alike have suffered tens of billions of
13 dollars in economic losses. Dams have failed catastrophically in Michigan. Farmers' crops have
14 been drowned in their fields across the Midwest. Coastal communities from Florida to New
15 Jersey are facing an existential crisis as a result of sea level rise and stronger storms. Thousands
16 of Americans have died. And President Trump still callously and willfully denies the science that
17 explains why so many are suffering.

18
19 Like so many crises facing the United States, the impacts of climate change are not evenly
20 distributed in our society or our economy. Communities of color, low-income families, and
21 Indigenous communities have long suffered disproportionate and cumulative harm from air
22 pollution, water pollution, and toxic sites. From Flint, Michigan, to the Navajo Nation, to
23 Lowndes County, Alabama, millions of Americans have been denied access to clean, safe
24 drinking water and even the most basic wastewater infrastructure. And although the youngest
25 generations of Americans have contributed the least to this calamity, they stand to lose the most
26 as they suffer from the impacts of runaway carbon pollution for decades to come.

27
28 Democrats believe there is a better way. We can and must build a thriving, equitable, and
29 globally competitive clean energy economy that puts workers and communities first and leaves
30 no one behind. We will help rebuild our economy from the COVID-19 pandemic and President
31 Trump's recession by mobilizing historic, transformative public and private investments to
32 launch a clean energy revolution. We applaud the organizing efforts of young people, union
33 workers, and communities of color to mobilize voters and make the climate crisis a top priority.
34 As Democrats, we believe the scientists: the window for unprecedented and necessary action is
35 closing, and closing fast. Democrats reject the false choice between growing our economy and
36 combating climate change; we can and must do both at the same time. We will use federal
37 resources and authorities across all agencies to deploy proven clean energy solutions; create
38 millions of family-supporting and union jobs; upgrade and make resilient our energy, water,
39 wastewater, and transportation infrastructure; and develop and manufacture next-generation
40 technologies to address the climate crisis right here in the United States. And we will do all this
41 with an eye to equity, access, benefits, and ownership opportunities for frontline communities—
42 because Democrats believe we must embed environmental justice, economic justice, and climate
43 justice at the heart of our policy and governing agenda.

44
45 We will take immediate action to reverse the Trump Administration's dangerous and destructive
46 rollbacks of critical climate and environmental protections. We will rejoin the Paris Climate

1 Agreement and, on day one, seek higher ambition from nations around the world, putting the
2 United States back in the position of global leadership where we belong. We will restore
3 protections for irreplaceable public lands and waters, from Bears Ears National Monument to the
4 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We will follow science and the law by reducing harmful
5 methane and carbon pollution from the energy sector.
6

7 Democrats will make investments to create millions of family-supporting and union jobs in clean
8 energy generation, energy efficiency, clean transportation, advanced manufacturing, and
9 sustainable agriculture across America. All jobs in the clean energy economy should provide an
10 opportunity to join a union. Democrats will restore and protect workers' rights to organize and
11 bargain collectively. The clean energy economy must represent the diversity of America. We
12 will invest in the education and training of underrepresented groups, including people of color,
13 low-income Americans, women, veterans, people with disabilities, and unemployed energy
14 workers for jobs in clean energy-related industries, especially union jobs that provide strong
15 opportunities for economic advancement.
16

17 Democrats will also mobilize a diverse new generation of young workers through a corps and
18 cohort challenged to conserve our public lands; deliver new clean energy, including to low-
19 income communities and communities of color; and address the changing climate, including
20 through pre-apprenticeship opportunities, joint labor-management registered apprenticeships for
21 training, and direct-hire programs that put good-paying and union jobs within reach for more
22 Americans.
23

24 We agree with scientists and public health experts that the United States—and the world—must
25 achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, and no later than 2050.
26

27 To reach net-zero emissions as rapidly as possible, Democrats commit to eliminating carbon
28 pollution from power plants by 2035 through technology-neutral standards for clean energy and
29 energy efficiency. We will dramatically expand solar and wind energy deployment through
30 community-based and utility-scale systems, including in rural areas. Within five years, we will
31 install 500 million solar panels, including eight million solar roofs and community solar energy
32 systems, and 60,000 wind turbines, and turn American ingenuity into American jobs by
33 leveraging federal policy to manufacture renewable energy solutions in America. Recognizing
34 the urgent need to decarbonize the power sector, our technology-neutral approach is inclusive of
35 all zero-carbon technologies, including hydroelectric power, geothermal, existing and advanced
36 nuclear, and carbon capture and storage.
37

38 Democrats believe that any clean energy infrastructure project financed with federal support,
39 including through the tax code, should come with robust wage and labor requirements. We will
40 build a modern electric grid by investing in interstate transmission projects and advanced, 21st
41 century grid technologies to power communities with clean electricity, including federal support
42 to build sustainable and resilient energy grids in rural America and in Tribal areas lacking energy
43 infrastructure. We will reduce methane pollution through strong federal standards and targeted
44 support for repairing and replacing aging distribution systems, which will create hundreds of
45 thousands of jobs, including for the same pipefitters, insulators, and other workers who built the

1 systems in the first place and who know best how to protect our communities from methane
2 pollution.

3
4 Democrats will lower families' energy bills by making energy-saving upgrades to up to two
5 million low-income households and affordable and public housing units within five years,
6 creating hundreds of thousands of jobs and promoting safe, healthy, and efficient homes. We will
7 ensure investments in affordable housing and public housing support both energy efficiency
8 retrofits and construction of new units, to greatly increase the number of energy-efficient homes
9 available to low-income families. We will address barriers and increase funding for programs
10 that enable energy efficiency improvements for low-income families in urban and rural areas,
11 including through the Weatherization Assistance Program and the Rural Utilities Service.

12
13 We will set a bold, national goal of achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for all new
14 buildings by 2030, on the pathway to creating a 100 percent clean building sector. Within five
15 years, we will incentivize tens of billions of dollars in private-sector investment to retrofit four
16 million buildings, including helping local governments save money and cut pollution by
17 weatherizing and upgrading energy systems in hospitals, schools, public housing, and municipal
18 buildings. Democrats will encourage states and cities to adopt energy-efficient building codes
19 and address barriers to energy efficiency upgrades, and leverage the federal footprint to model
20 net-zero and 100 percent clean energy building solutions.

21
22 Democrats affirm California's statutory authority under the Clean Air Act to set its own
23 emissions standards for cars and trucks. We will immediately convene California and other states
24 with labor, auto industry, and environmental leaders to inform ambitious executive actions that
25 will enable the United States to lead the way in building a clean, 21st century transportation
26 system and stronger domestic manufacturing base powered by high-wage and union jobs.
27 Democrats will move quickly to reestablish strong standards for clean cars and trucks that
28 consider the most recent advances in technology, and accelerate the adoption of zero-emission
29 vehicles in the United States while reclaiming market share for domestically produced vehicles.

30
31 We will reduce harmful air pollution and protect our children's health by transitioning the entire
32 fleet of 500,000 school buses to American-made, zero-emission alternatives within five years.
33 We will lead by example in the public sector by transitioning the three million vehicles in the
34 federal, state, and local fleets to zero-emission vehicles. Democrats will additionally support
35 private adoption of affordable low-pollution and zero-emission vehicles by partnering with state
36 and local governments to install at least 500,000 public charging stations from coast to coast. We
37 will increase investments in public transportation, understanding that the United States currently
38 lags behind many other developed countries in the quality and availability of efficient and
39 accessible public transportation. Democrats will invest in modernizing our freight infrastructure,
40 including ports, rail, and maritime freight, in order to reduce air and water pollution, improve
41 public health, create jobs, and improve economic competitiveness.

42
43 Democrats believe we can build the clean energy infrastructure of the future using American-
44 made materials. We will support measures to build a clean, equitable, and globally competitive
45 manufacturing sector, including national Buy Clean and Buy America standards to incentivize
46 production of low-carbon building and construction materials, like steel, cement, and timber,

1 here in the United States. We will apply a carbon adjustment fee at the border to products from
2 countries that fail to live up to their commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement, because
3 we won't let polluters undermine American competitiveness.
4

5 Democrats will partner with farmers to make the American agriculture sector the first in the
6 world to achieve net-zero emissions, opening up new sources of income for farmers in the
7 process. We will expand federal programs to help farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners
8 pursue high-productivity, lower-emission, and regenerative agricultural practices in order to help
9 build more resilient, vibrant, local and regional food systems. We will substantially increase
10 investments in voluntary conservation programs, which generate economic and environmental
11 benefits for farmers and their surrounding communities. We will support healthy coastal
12 communities and marine ecosystems to sustain and enhance our economic well-being, including
13 in the fishing, tourism and clean energy industries. And we will support communities and
14 businesses nationwide in their efforts to build zero-waste and circular economies, including
15 efforts to eliminate plastic waste and food waste.
16

17 Every American has the right to breathe clean air, drink clean water, and live without fear of
18 exposure to toxic waste. And all Americans should benefit from the clean energy economy—
19 especially those who have been left out and left behind for generations. Democrats will create an
20 environmental justice fund to make historic investments aimed at eliminating legacy pollution,
21 which disproportionately causes illness and premature death in communities of color, low-
22 income communities, and Indigenous communities. We will protect children's health by
23 replacing lead service lines and remediating lead paint in homes and schools; remediate
24 Superfund and other contaminated sites; and ensure housing and schools have adequate
25 plumbing and safe wastewater disposal systems. And we will set science-based drinking water
26 standards for emerging contaminants like PFOA and PFAS chemicals and establish aggressive
27 plans for remediating this dangerous pollution.
28

29 Democrats will work with affected frontline communities to develop a screening and mapping
30 tool to ensure racial and socioeconomic equity in federal climate, energy, and infrastructure
31 programs and identify areas of high cumulative pollution that threatens residents' health and
32 safety. We will help reduce heat stress in urban neighborhoods by planting millions of trees. We
33 will support locally-driven economic development and commit to directing a significant portion
34 of clean energy and sustainable infrastructure investments to historically marginalized
35 communities to help create local jobs and reduce energy poverty, install clean energy
36 technologies including community solar, build resilience to climate change impacts, prepare for
37 disasters, expand access to green space and outdoor recreation opportunities, improve public
38 health, and restore ecosystems.
39

40 Already, the impacts of climate change are being felt in communities across the country, and the
41 American people are paying the price. Democrats commit to reducing climate risks and building
42 back better after disasters and climate-fueled catastrophes in a resilient, green, and just manner.
43 We will empower local communities to become more resilient to the impacts of the climate
44 crisis. We will prioritize disaster preparedness for disproportionately exposed, frontline, and
45 vulnerable communities and those who struggle most to cope, including seniors, low-income
46 families, and people with disabilities, so that they can become more economically resilient to

1 extreme weather events, heat stress, and increases in disease that scientists have connected to
2 climate change. We will rectify the inequities and inefficiencies of disaster response, including
3 transparent and timely reporting and oversight and protections and enforcement of disability
4 rights. We will increase support for restoring wetlands, which are critical for protecting
5 communities from sea level rise and storm surge and also act as natural carbon sinks. We will
6 partner with states and local communities to make smart investments to avoid the loss of life and
7 property, prevent flooding, mitigate disaster risks, and adapt to costly, growing climate impacts.
8

9 Democrats will empower and stand with workers and communities who have put their health and
10 lives on the line and who have been impacted by the changing energy market, including by
11 fighting to protect retirees' health and pension benefits, shoring up the Black Lung Disability
12 Trust Fund, expanding the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act to include those harmed by
13 our nation's nuclear weapons efforts including uranium miners exposed to radiation on the job,
14 and increasing funding for the Appalachian Regional Commission to support locally-driven
15 economic development priorities. We will hold fossil fuel companies accountable for cleaning up
16 abandoned mine lands, oil and gas wells, and industrial sites, so these facilities no longer pollute
17 local environments and can be safely repurposed to support new economic activity, including in
18 the heart of coal country.
19

20 Democrats will support the most historically far reaching public investments and private sector
21 incentives for research, development, demonstration, and deployment of next-generation
22 technologies, once again making the United States the world's leader in innovation. We will
23 challenge the best and brightest scientists, innovators, and entrepreneurs in the world to pursue
24 breakthrough opportunities in energy storage, heavy-duty trucking and freight solutions,
25 sustainable aviation fuels, and direct air capture and net-negative emissions technologies. We
26 will advance innovative technologies that create cost-effective pathways for industries to
27 decarbonize, including carbon capture and sequestration that permanently stores greenhouse
28 gases and advanced nuclear that eliminates waste associated with conventional nuclear
29 technology, while ensuring environmental justice and other overburdened communities are
30 protected from increases in cumulative pollution. All of these investments will create jobs for
31 blue-collar workers, including in fenceline communities, help decarbonize American industries,
32 and create valuable new exports to help mitigate climate change around the world.
33

34 America's national parks and monuments, public lands, and marine protected areas are treasures
35 that should be held in trust for future generations. We will protect these precious places and
36 preserve America's unspoiled wildernesses for hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping by
37 codifying the roadless rule, and grow America's outdoor recreation economy, which supports
38 millions of jobs in rural areas. Democrats will immediately reverse the Trump Administration's
39 harmful rollbacks of protections for national monuments like Grand Staircase-Escalante National
40 Monument and Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument. We will take
41 action to protect wildernesses and waters, and require full, rigorous, and transparent scientific
42 and environmental reviews of any proposed mining projects near national treasures.
43

44 Democrats will protect wildlife habitats and biodiversity, slow extinction rates, and grow
45 America's natural carbon sinks by conserving 30 percent of our lands and waters by 2030. We
46 support fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund to increase resources for

1 conserving public lands and waters and incentivizing voluntary conservation efforts on private
2 lands, including through private-sector ecosystems markets. And Democrats will ensure
3 America’s public lands and waters reflect the diversity of our country by engaging all Americans
4 in the great outdoors, building a diverse workforce in our land management agencies, and
5 protecting landscapes, marinescapes, and cultural sites that tell the full story of America.
6
7

8 **RESTORING AND STRENGTHENING OUR DEMOCRACY**

9

10 Our government and our elections are supposed to reflect the interests of the American people,
11 not only the wealthiest few and the biggest corporations. Democrats will fight to restore and
12 protect Americans’ fundamental right to vote, including by aggressively pushing back against
13 Republican governors, legislatures, and state officials who have disenfranchised people of color,
14 young people, low-income people, and people with disabilities. And we will strictly enforce
15 ethics laws and improve transparency across the federal government in order to rebuild trust with
16 the American people, and will protect civil servants and whistleblowers from political
17 retribution.
18

19 Protecting and Enforcing Voting Rights

20

21 Democrats are committed to the sacred principle of “one person, one vote”—and we will fight to
22 achieve that principle for every citizen, regardless of race, income, disability status, geography,
23 or English language proficiency. We stand united against the determined Republican campaign
24 to disenfranchise voters through onerous voter ID laws, unconstitutional and excessive purges of
25 the voter rolls, and closures of polling places in low-income neighborhoods, on college
26 campuses, and in communities of color. Americans should never have to wait in hours-long lines
27 to exercise their voting rights.
28

29 Democrats will strengthen our democracy by guaranteeing that every American’s vote is
30 protected. We will make it a priority to pass legislation that restores and strengthens the Voting
31 Rights Act, and ensure the Department of Justice challenges state laws that make it harder for
32 Americans to vote. We will make voting easier and more accessible for all Americans by
33 supporting automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration, early voting, and universal
34 vote-from-home and vote-by-mail options. Democrats believe Election Day should be a national
35 holiday, in celebration of our democratic institutions and to make it easier for everyone to cast
36 their ballot. We will fully implement the Help America Vote Act and require that polling places
37 and elections are accessible for people with disabilities, and work to ensure that returning
38 citizens have their voting rights restored upon release from jail or prison. Democrats will also
39 fight for emergency funding for states to help make vote-from-home and vote-by-mail
40 universally available during the pandemic, while ensuring that all jurisdictions take steps to
41 ensure continued meaningful, safe opportunities to vote in person.
42

43 Gerrymandering distorts our democracy, and Democrats will enact measures to end partisan
44 gerrymandering in federal elections. We will protect the integrity of the decennial Census from
45 political interference, and ensure the Census Bureau is equipped to conduct cost-effective,
46 timely, and accurate surveys. Democrats will maintain the legal requirement for Census

1 participation and increase resources to reduce undercounts of communities of color, immigrants,
2 LGBT people, people with disabilities, rural and low-income populations, and young children
3 that have long plagued the decennial Census. We will also direct the Census Bureau to study
4 whether counting the prison population where they are incarcerated creates inequitable outcomes
5 in state or federal representation or funding allocations.

6
7 Democrats will increase investments to help state and local governments upgrade election
8 technology, including cybersecurity technology, and ensure that election technology is accessible
9 for people with disabilities. We will not tolerate election interference and will protect the
10 integrity of our elections from all enemies, foreign and domestic.

11 12 Reforming the Broken Campaign Finance System

13
14 Democrats believe that the interests and the voices of the American people should determine our
15 elections. Money is not speech, and corporations are not people. Democrats will fight to pass a
16 Constitutional amendment that will go beyond merely overturning *Citizens United* and related
17 decisions like *Buckley v. Valeo* by eliminating all private financing from federal elections.

18
19 In the meantime, Democrats will work with Congress on legislation to strengthen the public
20 funding system by matching small-dollar donations for all federal candidates, crack down on
21 foreign nationals who try to influence elections, and ensure that super PACs are wholly
22 independent of campaigns and political parties. We will bring an end to “dark money” by
23 requiring full disclosure of contributors to any group that advocates for or against candidates,
24 and bar 501(c)(4) organizations from spending money on elections. Democrats will ban
25 corporate PACs from donating to candidates and bar lobbyists from donating, fundraising, or
26 bundling for anyone they lobby.

27 28 Building an Effective, Transparent Federal Government

29
30 Every federal employee swears an oath to support and defend the Constitution. It is a sacred
31 promise to the American people—that federal workers, both civil servants and political
32 appointees, will put the interests of the many ahead of their own personal concerns. President
33 Trump and his Administration have abused the trust between the American people and their
34 government—including by denigrating civil servants, directing federal grants and contracts
35 toward their cronies and political donors, inappropriately interfering with federal investigations
36 and firing independent watchdogs, retaliating against whistleblowers, failing to share information
37 as required with Congress, and, most nefariously, violating the law by withholding
38 congressionally appropriated funds in an attempt to get a foreign government to interfere in
39 America’s elections.

40
41 Democrats will establish a commission on federal ethics to aggressively enforce and strengthen
42 federal ethics laws, including rules around personal financial disclosures for Executive Branch
43 officials, and make campaign finance, financial disclosure, and lobbying disclosure filings easier
44 for the public to access and understand. We support requiring all candidates for federal office,
45 including presidential candidates, to publicly disclose at least 10 years of tax returns.

1 The American people deserve assurances that their elected officials and federal appointees work
2 for them, not for special interests. Democrats will re-establish merit-based federal contracting
3 decisions and prohibit political appointees, at the White House or in agency leadership, from
4 interfering in grantmaking. We will restore and re-empower independent inspectors general
5 across the federal government and work to strengthen whistleblower protections to fully protect
6 federal employees from retaliation. And we will ban lobbying by foreign governments and
7 significantly lower the threshold for having to register as a federal lobbyist in order to close
8 loopholes that allow special interests to secretly influence policymaking in Congress and across
9 the federal government.

10
11 Now more than ever, federal agencies need experts on staff who know how to use science,
12 evidence, data, and facts to guide decision-making on behalf of the American people. As the
13 COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates, our country needs the best experts working within
14 government to protect and improve the lives of all Americans. Democrats support the
15 recruitment of people with expertise in science, social science, technology, and innovation to
16 jobs in public service to help solve our nation’s most pressing challenges. To ensure that federal
17 funds are invested as effectively and efficiently as possible, the federal government should be
18 using the best available evidence when making budget and spending decisions. Democrats will
19 ensure federal data collection and analysis is adequately funded and designed to allow for
20 disaggregation by race, gender, geography, disability status, and other important variables, so
21 that disparities can be better understood and addressed. Democrats support the widespread use of
22 strategies to promote evidence-based policymaking, including more robust evaluations of tax
23 expenditures and allocating funds for program evaluation, to help ensure the American people
24 are receiving the most productive, efficient services from our federal government.

25 26 Making Washington, D.C. the 51st State

27
28 It’s time to stop treating the more than 700,000 people who live in our nation’s capital as second-
29 class citizens. The residents of Washington, D.C. pay more per capita in federal income taxes
30 than any state in the country—and more in total federal income tax than 22 states—and yet the
31 District has zero voting representatives in the U.S. Congress. The Congress retains broad power
32 to override budget decisions made by democratically elected officials in Washington, D.C. And
33 as was made shockingly clear to the American people this year, under current law, Washington,
34 D.C. does not have control over its own National Guard units and can be occupied by military
35 forces at the President’s whim. The citizens of Washington, D.C.—a majority of whom are
36 people of color—voted overwhelmingly in favor of statehood in a 2016 referendum and have
37 ratified a state constitution. Democrats unequivocally support statehood for Washington, D.C., so
38 the citizens of the District can at last have full and equal representation in Congress and the
39 rights of self-determination.

40 41 Guaranteeing Self-Determination for Puerto Rico

42
43 The people of Puerto Rico deserve self-determination on the issue of status. Democrats will work
44 with representatives who support each of the various status options in Puerto Rico to develop
45 federal legislation that will set forth a fair and binding process for the people of Puerto Rico to

1 determine their own status. We believe all American citizens, including the people of Puerto
2 Rico, should have the right to vote for President of the United States.

3
4 Democrats are committed to helping the island rebuild and recover from the devastation wrought
5 by Hurricanes Irma and Maria and the recent earthquakes, and will mobilize resources across the
6 federal government to address the island's disparities in energy, infrastructure, health care,
7 education, housing, agriculture, employment, and disaster preparedness. Disaster response in
8 Puerto Rico must be given the same priority and be conducted on the same basis as federal
9 responses to natural disasters elsewhere in the United States. We will forgive disaster relief loans
10 issued to Puerto Rican municipalities following Hurricanes Irma and Maria to help expedite the
11 island's economic recovery.

12
13 The unequal treatment of Puerto Rico's residents must end. We will invest in the island's future
14 through economic development initiatives, increased education funding, construction of
15 affordable housing, and innovative energy and climate resilience programs. Democrats support
16 accelerating access to disaster recovery funds so the island can improve its infrastructure and
17 transform itself into one of the fastest-growing, most prosperous parts of the United States. We
18 also believe Puerto Rico should be treated equally with respect to federal programs, including
19 Medicaid, SNAP, and the Child Tax Credit.

20
21 Bankruptcy blocks Puerto Rico's growth and recovery. Democrats will help restructure and
22 provide relief from Puerto Rico's remaining debt burden and work with the government of
23 Puerto Rico to accelerate progress in order to dissolve the Financial Oversight and Management
24 Board.

25 26 Supporting the U.S. Territories

27
28 Democrats will support self-government and self-determination for the people of the U.S
29 territories, including respecting their right to decide their future status in a manner that does not
30 conflict with the Constitution, laws, and policies of the United States. The American citizens of
31 the U.S. territories should have the right to vote for President of the United States.

32
33 The U.S. Virgin Islands suffered significant impacts as a result of Hurricanes Irma and Maria,
34 and Guam and American Samoa have suffered damages as a result of intensifying Pacific
35 cyclones. Democrats will support investments to help the U.S. territories recover from recent
36 natural disasters and build increased resilience to the impacts of climate change, including by
37 expanding access to clean, affordable, reliable energy and water systems.

38
39 We will improve health care access and affordability in the territories, including reviewing the
40 feasibility of extending the Affordable Care Act and increasing the Medicaid cap in the
41 territories. And Democrats commit to ensuring veterans from the U.S. territories have access to
42 timely and quality health care through the VA.

43 44 Strengthening the U.S. Postal Service

1 The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is the world’s most efficient mail carrier, and Democrats are
2 wholly committed to supporting a public USPS. We will fight all efforts to privatize the USPS
3 and will work to ensure the USPS is financially sustainable, including by repealing the mandate
4 that the agency “pre-fund” retiree health costs. Democrats will protect the Postal Service’s
5 universal service obligation as a core American value and maintain six-day and doorstep mail
6 delivery, which is a lifeline for rural Americans. We will also support new revenue streams for
7 the USPS, including allowing secure shipping of alcoholic beverages by mail and exploring
8 options to enable unbanked and underbanked Americans to access financial services through the
9 Postal Service.

10 11 **CREATING A 21ST CENTURY IMMIGRATION SYSTEM** 12

13
14 Out of many, we are one. That bedrock American idea has animated our country from its earliest
15 days, inspiring people from every corner of the earth to participate in our great democratic
16 experiment. The Trump Administration has repudiated that idea and abandoned our values as a
17 diverse, compassionate, and welcoming country. Instead of pursuing a sensible, humane, and
18 responsible approach to immigration that strengthens the United States, the Trump
19 Administration has been callous, cruel, and reckless in the extreme. President Trump’s
20 immigration policies have made our communities less safe, undermined our economy, and
21 tarnished our image around the world.

22
23 This Administration’s cruelty and dehumanization of immigrants stretches the imagination and
24 shocks the conscience: forcibly separating families and putting children in cages; deporting
25 veterans who have fought to defend our freedoms; conducting militarized raids on our
26 workplaces; endangering lives by denying COVID-19 testing and treatment based on
27 immigration status, including to essential workers at the forefront of the pandemic response;
28 banning people from traveling to the United States based on their faith or their country of origin;
29 and turning away refugees and asylum seekers fleeing violence and persecution.

30
31 Democrats believe America can do better. Indeed, we must.

32
33 The truth is that our immigration system was broken long before President Trump came into
34 office, and his departure alone won’t fix it. Immigrants are essential to our society and our
35 economy. Immigrants are part of our families. They enrich our culture. They grow our food, care
36 for our loved ones, serve in our armed forces, and provide critical health care services.
37 Immigrants make America stronger. Not only do immigrants support us—immigrants are us. Our
38 families and our communities, our congregations and our schools, our businesses large and small
39 have been built and sustained through the inclusion of immigrants. That’s why Democrats
40 commit to building a 21st century immigration system that reflects our values, repairs past
41 harms, heals our communities, rebuilds our economy, and renews our global leadership.

42
43 We will start by righting the wrongs of the Trump Administration.
44

1 Democrats will rescind President Trump’s fabricated “National Emergency,” which siphons
2 funding away from our men and women in uniform to construct an unnecessary, wasteful, and
3 ineffective wall on the southern border.

4
5 We will immediately terminate the Trump Administration’s discriminatory travel and
6 immigration bans that disproportionately impact Muslim and African people, and invite those
7 whose visas have been denied under these xenophobic and un-American policies to re-apply to
8 come to the United States.

9
10 We will reinstate, expand, and streamline protections for Dreamers and the parents of American
11 citizen children to keep families together in the communities they have long called home.

12
13 Democrats believe the United States should be a beacon of hope for those who are suffering
14 violence and injustice, which is why we will protect and expand the existing asylum system and
15 other humanitarian protections. We will reverse Trump Administration policies that prevent
16 victims of gang and domestic violence, as well as LGBTQ+ people who are unsafe in their home
17 countries, from being eligible to apply for asylum. Democrats will end Trump Administration
18 policies that deny protected entry to asylum seekers, put them at great risk, and destabilize our
19 neighbors and the broader region. And we will end prosecution of asylum seekers at the border
20 and policies that force them to apply from “safe third countries,” which are far from safe.

21
22 Democrats believe that our fight to end systemic and structural racism in our country extends to
23 our immigration system, including the policies at our borders and ports of entry, detention
24 centers, and within immigration law enforcement agencies and their policies and operations. And
25 Democrats will immediately halt enforcement of and rescind the Trump Administration’s un-
26 American immigrant wealth test.

27
28 Even as we work to reverse the enormous damage caused by the Trump Administration, we are
29 determined to build a 21st century immigration system that embodies our values, expands
30 economic opportunity for all Americans, and enhances our global competitiveness.

31
32 Democrats believe it is long past time to provide a roadmap to citizenship for the millions of
33 undocumented workers, caregivers, students, and children who are an essential part of our
34 economy and of the fabric of our nation. We will fast-track this process for those workers who
35 have been essential to the pandemic response and recovery efforts, including health care
36 workers, farmworkers, and others. We will also eliminate unfair barriers to naturalization, reduce
37 application backlogs, and make our immigration processes faster, more efficient, and less costly.
38 These reforms will strengthen our communities, our families, and our country.

39
40 Democrats believe family unity should be a guiding principle for our immigration policy. We
41 will prioritize family reunification for children still separated from their families, and we will
42 restore family reunification programs ended by the Trump Administration. We support
43 legislation to treat the spouses and children of green card holders as immediate relatives and end
44 their unfair separation. We will eliminate family-based green card backlogs and reform the
45 system to speed up family-based visas. And we will work with Congress to eliminate

1 immigration barriers, such as the three- and 10-year bars, and remove the 10-year waiting period
2 for waivers to the permanent bars that keep loved ones apart.

3
4 We believe we should expand, not reduce, the annual visa cap for victims of sex trafficking,
5 violence against women and children, and other heinous crimes; ensure that same sex-couples
6 and their children receive equal treatment in the immigration and naturalization systems; reaffirm
7 America's commitment to family-based immigration; and preserve the critical role of diversity
8 preferences in our immigration system. Democrats will ensure that law-abiding individuals with
9 Temporary Protected Status or Deferred Enforced Departure are not sent back to countries where
10 they cannot live safely, and we will work to pave a path to citizenship for those who have been in
11 the country for an extended period of time and built their lives in the United States.

12
13 Democrats know that when employers feel free to abuse and bully immigrant workers, all
14 workers suffer. That's why we will hold employers accountable, promote workers' rights, and
15 prioritize the enforcement of labor and employment laws across the economy, including
16 discrimination and sexual harassment protections, wage and hour laws, and health and safety
17 rules. We will prevent employers from taking advantage of immigrant workers by supporting the
18 Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights and the Protect Our Workers from Exploitation and
19 Retaliation (POWER) Act.

20
21 We will ensure that enforcement mechanisms are humane and consistent with our values and
22 international humanitarian obligations. That's why we will end workplace and community raids.
23 We will protect sensitive locations like our schools, houses of worship, health care facilities,
24 benefits offices, and DMVs from immigration enforcement actions. We will prohibit
25 enforcement actions that deter access to justice at courthouses, end programs that force state and
26 local law enforcement to also be responsible for immigration enforcement, and stop targeting
27 men and women who served in uniform and their families.

28
29 We believe detention should be a last resort, not the default. Democrats will prioritize
30 investments in more effective and cost-efficient community-based alternatives to detention. We
31 will end for-profit detention centers and ensure that any facility where migrants are being
32 detained is held to the highest standards of care and guarantees their safety and dignity.
33 Detention of children should be restricted to the shortest possible time, with their access to
34 education and proper care ensured.

35
36 Democrats will implement robust mechanisms for oversight, accountability, and transparency to
37 ensure immigration agencies abide by our values, the U.S. Constitution, and international law.
38 Democrats believe immigration judges should be able to operate free of inappropriate political
39 influence, and will support steps to make immigration courts more independent. We will demand
40 that leaders of our immigration agencies be Senate-confirmed professionals, and that
41 Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection personnel abide by
42 our values and professional, evidence-based standards and are held accountable for any
43 inappropriate, unlawful, or inhumane treatment.

44
45 A 21st century immigration system that honors our values is an essential prerequisite not just to
46 recovering from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, but to strengthening our

1 democracy and guaranteeing America’s long-term economic competitiveness. That’s why
2 Democrats believe in improving and increasing opportunities for legal, permanent immigration.
3 Our family, humanitarian, and diversity pathways have contributed immeasurably to the
4 vibrancy and productivity of American society and should continue to be the centerpiece of our
5 immigration system. We also support awarding visas for permanent, employment-based
6 immigration in a way that is responsive to labor market needs. We want to attract and keep talent
7 in this country, which is why Democrats will end the Trump Administration’s freeze on green
8 cards for new immigrants and instead pursue a meaningful reform agenda.

9
10 Democrats support policies and programs to make it easier for qualified immigrants and their
11 families to become full and equal citizens, including increasing funding for culturally appropriate
12 immigrant inclusion and citizenship services, legal support, English classes and bilingual
13 education, workforce development, and adult education.

14
15 Finally, Democrats will address the root causes of migration—violence and insecurity, poverty,
16 pervasive corruption, lack of educational and economic opportunity, and the impacts of climate
17 change. Disciplined American leadership and well-designed assistance programs can help
18 prevent and mitigate the effects of migration crises around the world, from Southeast Asia to
19 Sub-Saharan Africa to Central America. We will support a comprehensive strategy to strengthen
20 security and prosperity in partnership with the people of Central America and the Caribbean and
21 with the support of the international community. And we will renew American diplomacy as our
22 tool of first resort, rebuild our partnerships and alliances, and once again lead the global
23 humanitarian response.

24 25 26 **PROVIDING A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION IN EVERY ZIP CODE**

27
28 Education is fundamental to the idea of America and to fulfilling our nation’s promise. It is the
29 key to addressing the challenges before us—to growing our economy, maintaining American
30 competitiveness on the world stage, and building a more just, equitable, civically engaged, and
31 socially conscientious nation. As Democrats, we believe that education is a critical public
32 good—not a commodity—and that it is the government’s responsibility to ensure that every
33 child, everywhere, is able to receive a world-class education that enables them to lead
34 meaningful lives, no matter their race, ZIP code, disability status, sexual orientation, gender
35 identity, or household income.

36
37 For too long, we have short-changed our children by underinvesting in our nation’s public
38 schools and in our higher education system. Despite ample research showing that early childhood
39 education can improve outcomes for students for decades to come, we still do not have universal,
40 high-quality pre-K. Despite the decades-long trend that has seen more and more women entering
41 the labor force as breadwinners, it is still far too difficult for families to secure safe and
42 affordable child care services. Our public schools are bedrock community institutions, and yet
43 our educators are underpaid, our classrooms are overstuffed, and our school buildings have been
44 neglected, especially in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. Roughly six in 10
45 jobs require at least some education beyond high school, and yet the ever-rising cost of college
46 tuition and fees leaves higher education out of reach—or saddles students with a lifetime of debt.

1
2 The emergency conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic have vividly demonstrated to
3 parents, students, and educators across the country that there is no sustainable, long-term
4 substitute for high-quality, in-classroom learning. Significant gaps in access to technology,
5 including lack of access to high-speed broadband, have deepened inequities in our educational
6 system for students of color, students with disabilities, and students in rural areas and under-
7 resourced neighborhoods during this pandemic. We will need increased investments in public
8 education to help students get back on track when public health experts determine it is safe to
9 return to schools.

10
11 Democrats believe we can and must do better for our children, our educators, and our country.
12 We are committed to making the investments our students and teachers need to build equity and
13 safeguard humanity in our educational system and guarantee every child can receive a great
14 education. We will support evidence-based programs and pedagogical approaches, including
15 assessments that consider the well-being of the whole student and recognize the range of ways
16 students can demonstrate learning. We will reimagine our education system guided by the
17 stakeholders who know these issues best: young people, educators, parents, and community
18 leaders. Democrats fundamentally believe our education system should prepare all our
19 students—indeed, all of us—for college, careers, lifelong learning, and to be informed, engaged
20 citizens of our communities, our country, and our planet.

21 22 Guaranteeing Universal Early Childhood Education

23
24 Democrats believe that all children across the United States should have access to high-quality
25 early childhood education programs. We will work with states to offer pre-K for all three- and
26 four-year-olds and expand Head Start and Early Head Start. We will drive increased resources to
27 the communities with the highest need, including those with the highest concentrations of low-
28 income students and rural areas, and will strive to support holistic school readiness. We also will
29 ensure access to critical early childhood programs for students with disabilities and English
30 language learners.

31
32 We recognize that learning starts at birth, and the exorbitant costs of safe, quality child care
33 present a significant economic burden to families. Democrats support making child care and
34 dependent tax credits significantly more generous and will increase funding to states to guarantee
35 that low-income and middle class families can afford child care. We will make major
36 investments to increase quality options for parents and increase compensation for providers.
37 Democrats also support expanding proven programs for low-income and first-time parents,
38 including home visiting, that can help connect families in need to child care, education, and child
39 development opportunities and improve outcomes for children and parents alike.

40
41 Democrats also support raising early childhood standards and providing ongoing professional
42 development for early childhood educators, to ensure that children’s academic, social
43 development, behavioral, and cognitive needs are being met. Democrats believe that early
44 childhood educators, like all educators and all workers, should be paid a fair wage and able to
45 organize, join a union, and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits, and working
46 conditions.

1
2 Supporting High-Quality K-12 Schools Across America
3

4 Each year, the United States spends \$23 billion more on schools in predominantly white districts
5 than in non-white districts. Democrats are committed to closing the school funding gap by
6 tripling Title I funding, which benefits schools that serve low-income students, and incentivizing
7 states to adopt progressive funding formulas that direct resources to the schools that need it most.
8 We will also ensure sustainable, reliable funding for rural schools and Bureau of Indian
9 Education schools.

10
11 As the COVID-19 pandemic has made plain, our public schools are more than places where
12 children learn—they are pillars of our neighborhoods and our society. Democrats believe that no
13 student should ever be shamed over school lunch debt, and support expanding universal free
14 school meal programs. We will also support wraparound health care and nutrition services,
15 before- and after-school programs, adult education classes, and other services by significantly
16 expanding the community school model.

17
18 Students should have multiple public school pathways to be able to access the opportunities they
19 deserve. Democrats will work to expand access to career and technical education, magnet
20 schools for science and the arts, International Baccalaureate programs, and early college high
21 schools to offer multiple pathways to meet the diverse needs and interests of America’s high
22 school students. We will increase investments in high-quality science, technology, engineering,
23 and mathematics programs in our public schools, support access to computer science for all and
24 improve professional development opportunities for math and science teachers, including
25 through the creation of a national science corps of outstanding STEM teachers serving as leaders
26 in their schools and communities. Democrats believe we must prioritize STEAM education and
27 funding for underrepresented students, including students of color, girls, and low-income
28 students, to help reduce enrollment and achievement gaps. In addition to developing strong
29 literacy, numeracy, and STEAM skills, our education system should develop the deep learning
30 and life skills needed to thrive in the 21st century economy, including critical and creative
31 thinking, leadership, and judgment and decision-making.

32
33 Charter schools were originally intended to be publicly funded schools with increased flexibility
34 in program design and operations. Democrats believe that education is a public good and should
35 not be saddled with a private profit motive, which is why we will ban for-profit private charter
36 businesses from receiving federal funding. And we recognize the need for more stringent
37 guardrails to ensure charter schools are good stewards of federal education funds. We support
38 measures to increase accountability for charter schools, including by requiring all charter schools
39 to meet the same standards of transparency as traditional public schools, including with regard to
40 civil rights protections, racial equity, admissions practices, disciplinary procedures, and school
41 finances. We will call for conditioning federal funding for new, expanded charter schools or for
42 charter school renewals on a district’s review of whether the charter will systematically
43 underserve the neediest students. And Democrats oppose private school vouchers and other
44 policies that divert taxpayer-funded resources away from the public school system.
45

1 Democrats are committed to guaranteeing schools are spaces of physical and psychological
2 safety for students and educators alike. Guns have no place in our schools. We disagree strongly
3 with the Trump Administration’s dangerous and short-sighted suggestion that teachers should
4 bring firearms into the classroom. Democrats also believe that all schools should have adequate
5 resources to expand school-based health services and hire guidance counselors, social workers,
6 and school psychologists to help support students’ mental health needs and social and emotional
7 development. And we will act expeditiously to reinstate Department of Education guidance
8 protecting transgender students’ rights under Title IX and make clear that schools shall not
9 discriminate based on LGBTQ+ status.

10
11 It is unacceptable that America’s public schools are more racially segregated today than they
12 were in the late 1960s. Democrats support appointing judges who will enforce the Civil Rights
13 Act in schools and will fund magnet schools and school transportation initiatives to help
14 facilitate improved integration. We will also reinvigorate and increase funding for the
15 Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights and improve federal data collection on racial
16 segregation in schools. Schools should be safe zones for children and their families, which is
17 why Democrats will protect sensitive locations like schools from immigration enforcement
18 actions and will ensure English language learners receive the support they need to succeed.

19
20 Democrats believe in providing equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities. We
21 will fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation
22 Act, and the *Olmstead* decision to provide school districts with additional resources to better
23 serve students with disabilities and fully implement the law’s least restrictive environment
24 requirement. We will ban seclusion and prevent and decrease use of physical restraint, in
25 partnership with teachers, school administrators, and the disability rights movement. Democrats
26 also support aggressive enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act in schools and other
27 settings.

28
29 The evidence from nearly two decades of education reforms that hinge on standardized test
30 scores shows clearly that high-stakes testing has not led to enough improvement in outcomes for
31 students or for schools, and can lead to discrimination against students, particularly students with
32 disabilities, students of color, low-income students, and English language learners. Democrats
33 will work to end the use of such high-stakes tests and encourage states to develop reliable,
34 continuous, evidence-based approaches to student assessment that rely on multiple and holistic
35 measures that better represent student achievement. Those measures will be supported by data
36 collection and analysis disaggregated by race, gender, disability status, and other important
37 variables, to identify disparities in educational equity, access, and outcomes.

38
39 Educators have always been heroes. The COVID-19 pandemic has made the value that educators
40 provide to children, parents, and the economy obvious as never before to tens of millions of
41 Americans. Public school educators should have the same rights to organize, join a union, and
42 collectively bargain as private sector workers. Democrats will fight to significantly increase pay
43 and benefits for all educators, in order to help recruit, retain, and reward high-quality teachers
44 and support professionals, and will continue to support measures to help teachers pay for out-of-
45 pocket classroom expenses. We will support programs to help introduce high school students to
46 the teaching profession, enable school support staff to climb the professional ladder within

1 schools, and recruit a diverse educational workforce through partnerships with HBCUs, MSIs,
2 and TCUs.

3 4 Making Higher Education Affordable and Accessible 5

6 Democrats believe that everyone should be able to earn a degree beyond high school, if they
7 choose to, without money standing in the way. That is why we will make public colleges and
8 universities tuition-free for students whose families earn less than \$125,000—roughly 80 percent
9 of the American people. We will double the maximum Pell Grant award for low-income
10 students, and double federal support for TRIO programs that help first-generation college
11 students, students with disabilities, veterans, and other underrepresented groups apply to and
12 complete college.

13
14 HBCUs, MSIs, and TCUs serve a disproportionate number of low-income students who might
15 otherwise be unable to access a college degree, and yet these vital institutions are chronically
16 under-resourced. Democrats will work to provide grants to HBCUs, MSIs, and TCUs to lower
17 student costs, increase academic research capabilities, and ensure these essential institutions can
18 continue to thrive in the future.

19
20 Democrats support making community colleges tuition-free for all students, including Dreamers.
21 Our nation’s network of two-year community colleges provides accessible, high-quality
22 education for students of all ages.

23
24 We will increase federal support for services like child care on college campuses, so more
25 students are able to balance the demands of school and family and graduate with degrees.
26 Democrats also support increased funding for wraparound services, including covering the cost
27 of textbooks and fees for low-income students and establishing programs to address campus food
28 insecurity, so students can focus on what matters most: their studies.

29
30 Democrats will fight to create a federal funding program for higher education, modeled on Title I
31 funding for K-12 schools, that would direct funds to public and nonprofit colleges and
32 universities and minority-serving institutions based on the proportion of low-income students
33 those schools enroll and graduate. We will promote transparency and fairness regarding higher
34 education faculty working conditions, including adjuncts, graduate employees, and full-time
35 lecturers who are often grossly underpaid compared to full professors, and support and
36 encourage professor tenure. And Democrats will safeguard academic freedom on college
37 campuses.

38
39 Democrats oppose the Trump Administration’s cruel and capricious treatment of foreign students
40 studying in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. Young people around the world
41 dream of coming to the United States to study, innovate, and contribute to our research
42 institutions, our economy, and our communities. We believe it strengthens our higher education
43 sector and our country to welcome foreign students to study in our colleges and universities.

44 45 Providing Borrowers Relief From Crushing Student Debt 46

1 Student debt is holding millions of Americans back. The COVID-19 pandemic and President
2 Trump's recession are making it harder for those with student loans to make ends meet right
3 now. Democrats will work to authorize up to \$10,000 in student debt relief per borrower to help
4 families weather this crisis.

5
6 Beyond that immediate relief, Democrats will also take steps to ease the burden of high monthly
7 student loan payments by pausing monthly billing and stopping interest from accruing on federal
8 student loans for people earning less than \$25,000, and capping payments at no more than five
9 percent of discretionary income for those earning more than \$25,000. After 20 years, remaining
10 federal student loan debt should be automatically forgiven without tax liability. For those earning
11 less than \$125,000, we support forgiving all undergraduate tuition-related federal student debt
12 from two- and four-year public colleges and universities, and we will also apply this benefit to
13 individuals holding federal student loans for tuition from private HBCUs and MSIs.

14
15 Democrats support modernizing and improving the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program,
16 including making the enrollment process automatic for people who work in schools, government
17 agencies, and non-profit organizations. We will also make the program more generous by
18 forgiving up to \$10,000 in student debt per year for up to five years.

19
20 Not only will these measures make it easier for Americans to buy a home or start a small
21 business, student debt forgiveness is key to helping address the racial wealth gap, as students of
22 color are more likely to have to borrow to finance higher education. Democrats will also
23 empower the CFPB to take action against exploitative lenders and will work with Congress to
24 allow student debt to be discharged during bankruptcy.

25
26 The Trump Administration has let for-profit colleges and universities once again prey upon
27 students with impunity by repealing important protections. Democrats will crack down on
28 predatory for-profit higher education programs, including by issuing requirements that these
29 programs be able to demonstrate their value and effectiveness before becoming eligible for
30 federal student loans. We will call upon the Secretary of Education to forgive debt carried by
31 students who were ripped off by predatory schools, including by programs that defrauded
32 students or that misrepresented program offerings or program outcomes, as well as debt held by
33 people who are permanently disabled. And we will protect veterans and servicemembers from
34 being steered into low-performing for-profit higher education and professional programs.

35
36

RENEWING AMERICAN LEADERSHIP

1
2
3 Democrats believe that we can only be strong in the world when we are strong and united at
4 home. We believe that a healthy democracy, just society, and inclusive economy are essential
5 prerequisites for effective American leadership abroad. And we believe that the ultimate measure
6 —and purpose—of our foreign policy is whether it protects and advances America’s security,
7 prosperity and values—and delivers results for all Americans.
8

9 President Trump promised he would put “America First”—but Trump’s America stands alone.
10 Under his leadership, America’s reputation and influence are in tatters. Our country is less safe,
11 our economy more fragile, and our democracy, values, and unity endangered.
12

13 Rather than advance our interests and values in a more competitive world, President Trump has
14 retreated—allowing our adversaries to fill the void. He has attacked the sources of our strength,
15 hollowed out American diplomacy, shredded international commitments, weakened our
16 alliances, and tarnished our credibility.
17

18 Rather than make smart investments to keep our military’s competitive edge, President Trump
19 has wasted billions on vanity projects, barred patriotic Americans from serving their country,
20 denied military families the care and support they have earned, and tried to use our women and
21 men in uniform to sow fear and division.
22

23 Rather than help Americans compete in the global economy, he’s launched reckless, politically-
24 motivated tariff wars that have punished American workers, antagonized our allies, and benefited
25 our adversaries.
26

27 Rather than end our forever wars, he’s brought us to the brink of new conflicts, and further
28 militarized our foreign policy. Rather than reduce nuclear dangers, he’s amplified them, and
29 brought the world closer to catastrophe.
30

31 Rather than stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies and partners, he’s betrayed them.
32

33 Rather than defend democracy and human rights, he’s fawned over autocrats, sent love letters to
34 despots, sided with dictators over peaceful protestors, and invited foreign interference in our
35 elections. Rather than root out corruption, he’s made common cause with kleptocrats.
36

37 Rather than fight the existential threat of climate change, he’s denied science and accelerated the
38 damage.
39

40 In every region and on every issue, American security and interests are at greater peril—and our
41 rivals at greater advantage—than four years ago.
42

43 Democrats believe four more years of Donald Trump will damage our influence beyond repair.
44 But closing the chapter on “America First” is just the beginning of the work ahead. We must
45 meet the world as it is today, not as it was before President Trump’s destruction. That’s why we
46 cannot simply aspire to restore American leadership. We must reinvent it for a new era.

1
2 We will revitalize the power and purpose of American diplomacy to compete in a more contested
3 world. We will lead not just with the example of our power, but with the power of our example.
4 We will place values at the center of our foreign policy. And we will reinvent alliances,
5 partnerships, and international institutions to meet common challenges that no country can face
6 on its own. The world today looks very different from the post-WWII period that gave birth to
7 our alliance system. But these changes make our alliances more—not less—crucial to our
8 success.

9
10 We will ensure that our military has no peer. We owe it to our men and women in uniform and to
11 the American public to spend our defense dollars more wisely and strategically—focused on
12 building a force that can deter and win the conflicts of the 21st century. And we will use force
13 only when necessary, always as a last resort, and with the informed consent of the American
14 people.

15
16 And, most importantly, Democrats will ensure that the reinvention of American leadership
17 abroad prioritizes and accelerates our renewal at home. We will root a disciplined foreign policy
18 in the needs and aspirations of the American middle class and the imperative of building a more
19 dynamic, fair, and resilient society—the ultimate wellspring of our power.

20 21 Revitalizing American Diplomacy

22
23 Democrats will revitalize American diplomacy to ensure that the United States remains the
24 world’s pivotal power and a principled force for peace and prosperity.

25
26 The United States should be at the head of the table whenever the safety and well-being of
27 Americans is at stake, working in common cause with our allies and partners. Time and again,
28 the Trump Administration has stormed out, leaving America’s seat at the table vacant and
29 American interests on the menu. Americans deserve better.

30 31 *Rebuilding America’s Tool of First Resort*

32
33 Democrats believe that diplomacy should be our tool of first resort. The world’s greatest power
34 deserves to have the world’s very best diplomatic corps. But today, American diplomacy is badly
35 adrift and under resourced, and our diplomats are demoralized.

36
37 Democrats will support and invest in long overdue reforms to make the State Department more
38 strategic, modern, agile, and effective. Rather than militarize our foreign policy, treat our
39 diplomats with contempt, and call for reckless budget cuts, Democrats will put diplomacy back
40 in the hands of professionals and ensure they are better prepared to advance American interests
41 on the central issues of our time, like disruptive technology and climate change. And we will
42 expand and reform the Foreign Service so it reflects the diversity and richness of the country it
43 represents.

1 *Reinventing Alliances*

2
3 Democrats believe America’s alliances are an irreplaceable cornerstone of our national security
4 that should be cultivated, not cast away. Our allies offer an enormous strategic advantage that
5 our rivals can’t match. They multiply our influence, spread our reach, lighten our burden, and
6 advance our shared interests and priorities much farther than we could ever do on our own.
7

8 President Trump has undermined our alliances in ways that our adversaries could have only
9 dreamed of—sowing doubts about our commitments to diplomatic agreements, mutual defense,
10 democratic values, and strategic purpose. As a result, our alliance system today faces its biggest
11 test since the end of the Cold War. He has pushed to bring Russia back into the G7 while
12 lambasting our NATO partners and ignoring intelligence about Russian bounties for killing
13 American troops and other coalition forces in Afghanistan. He has undermined confidence in
14 America’s commitment to the alliance’s Article 5 mutual defense provision, and threatened to
15 pull troops out of Germany without consultation. In the midst of a nuclear crisis on the Korean
16 Peninsula, he tried to extort our South Korean allies to dramatically increase their share of
17 alliance costs.
18

19 Democrats will not only repair our alliances, but reinvent them to advance mutual priorities and
20 deal with new challenges. We believe our alliances are strongest when they are rooted in shared
21 democratic values. That’s why we need to signal clearly our profound concerns about democratic
22 backsliding in a number of ally states, and why we need to work with allied democracies to end
23 democracy’s global recession.
24

25 We will make developing shared responses to non-military threats like disinformation,
26 corruption, and economic coercion, priorities in our agenda. We will work with our partners to
27 improve interoperability, and we will encourage them to build up their defense capabilities, take
28 greater responsibility for regional security, and contribute their fair share. But we will never treat
29 our alliances like protection rackets.
30

31 *International Institutions*

32
33 Democrats believe that American security and prosperity are enhanced when the United States
34 leads in shaping the rules, forging the agreements, and steering the institutions that guide
35 international relations. We believe the system of international institutions we built and led over
36 the past seven decades has generated an enormous return on our investment. And in today’s more
37 competitive world, its renovation is a critical diplomatic priority. Unfortunately, President Trump
38 has orchestrated an American retreat from global bodies that weakens our influence, cedes
39 ground to our adversaries, and puts global peace and prosperity in jeopardy.
40

41 Instead of walking away, Democrats believe the United States should lead the way and mobilize
42 our partners to work in common cause. We will rejoin and reform the WHO, the United Nations
43 Human Rights Council, and the United Nations Population Fund, because in a global public
44 health crisis and a global democratic recession, American leadership is needed more than ever.
45 We will work to modernize international institutions to make sure they are fit for purpose in the
46 21st century and responsible stewards of both public funds and the world’s trust.

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Foreign Assistance and Development

Democrats believe that foreign assistance and development programs are powerful tools for promoting American, and global, security and prosperity. With less than one percent of its annual budget, the United States gets an extraordinary return on its investments in the prevention and alleviation of poverty, hunger, disease, and conflict, the empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized populations, and the opening of global markets for American business and exports to thrive. That’s why we will ensure that the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) reclaims its position as the world’s premier development agency. And it’s why we reject the Trump Administration’s punitive and transactional approach to foreign aid and its use to advance domestic political errands at the expense of our national interests.

Democrats will devote the resources and implement the reforms necessary to further multiply the impact of foreign assistance. We will reaffirm America’s commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and promote data efforts and transparency measures that ensure accountability and help identify areas for strategic investment. We will incorporate local perspectives, including from civil society partners, into the design, execution, and evaluation of our programs to secure lasting impact. And we will provide the budgetary support and statutory authorities necessary to make sure our aid institutions, including the new U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, are successfully integrated into broader international and private-sector development efforts. Democrats will lead international efforts to help developing countries withstand and recover from debt crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we will push for international standards that establish more transparency and sustainability in development financing.

Transforming Our Armed Forces for the 21st century

Democrats believe our military is—and must be—the most effective fighting force in the world. To keep it that way, we need to bring our forever wars to a responsible end, rationalize our defense budget, invest in the forces and technologies of the future, repair civil-military relations, and strengthen our covenant with service members, veterans, and military families.

Ending Forever Wars

Democrats know it’s time to bring nearly two decades of unceasing conflict to an end. Our military engagements, which have spanned from West Africa to Southeast Asia, have cost more than \$5 trillion and claimed more than half a million lives. Our war in Afghanistan is the longest war in American history, with the youngest U.S. troops now fighting a war that was launched before they were even born. President Trump said he would get the United States out of these wars, but instead he deployed more combat forces, expanded their missions, and stoked regional tensions that unnecessarily endangered American lives and interests.

Democrats will deliver on this overdue commitment to end the forever wars, and we will do it responsibly—setting priorities, leading with diplomacy, protecting ourselves from terrorist threats, enabling local partners, and bringing our troops home.

1
2 Democrats are committed to a durable and inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan that
3 ensures that al-Qaeda isn't allowed to reconstitute, the Islamic State (ISIS) isn't allowed to grow,
4 and the international community can help Afghans safeguard hard-fought gains, especially for
5 women and girls.
6

7 Democrats will end support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen and help bring the war to an end.
8 This war is responsible for the world's worst humanitarian crisis, and it amplifies threats to the
9 region and to our interests. Democrats believe that the United States should support diplomatic
10 efforts—not block them.
11

12 Democrats will not only end the wars that have cost so much American blood and treasure—we
13 will apply their lessons. We will only use force when necessary to protect national security and
14 when the objective is clear and achievable—with the informed consent of the American people,
15 and where warranted, the approval of Congress. That is why we will work with Congress to
16 repeal decades-old authorizations for the use of military force and replace them with a narrow
17 and specific framework that will ensure we can protect Americans from terrorist threats while
18 ending the forever wars.
19

20 Rather than occupy countries and overthrow regimes to prevent terrorist attacks, Democrats will
21 prioritize more effective and less costly diplomatic, intelligence, and law enforcement tools. We
22 will right-size our counterterrorism footprint, put it in service of broader regional and
23 overarching foreign policy objectives, and ensure it never undermines the values we seek to
24 uphold. And we will mobilize our partners to make sustained investments that can prevent
25 conflict and help extinguish the flames on which extremists feed.
26

27 *Securing our Competitive Edge* 28

29 Democrats believe the United States military should be the best-trained, best-equipped, and most
30 effective fighting force in the world. Ending the forever wars, reducing the enormous stress on
31 our forces, and rationalizing our global military footprint are essential prerequisites to securing
32 our competitive edge—but they're not enough.
33

34 We will invest in technology and forces that meet the threats of the future—from cyber to space,
35 and artificial intelligence to unmanned systems—and reinforce the alliances and partnerships that
36 enhance our collective security. Rather than continuing to rely on legacy platforms that are
37 increasingly exposed and vulnerable, Democrats support funding a more cost-effective, agile,
38 flexible, and resilient force with modern transportation and logistics capabilities that can operate
39 in more contested environments. Democrats will accelerate defense transformation in a
40 responsible, ethical way, and with strong privacy protections. And we believe the implications of
41 climate change for national security and the Department of Defense can no longer be an
42 afterthought, but must be at the core of all policy and operational plans to secure our vital
43 interests.
44
45

1 *Defense Spending*

2
3 Democrats believe the measure of our security is not how much we spend on defense, but how
4 we spend our defense dollars and in what proportion to other tools in our foreign policy toolbox
5 and other urgent domestic investments. We believe we can and must ensure our security while
6 restoring stability, predictability, and fiscal discipline in defense spending. We spend 13 times
7 more on the military than we do on diplomacy. We spend five times more in Afghanistan each
8 year than we do on global public health and preventing the next pandemic. We can maintain a
9 strong defense and protect our safety and security for less. It's past time to rebalance our
10 investments, improve the efficiency and competitiveness of our defense industrial base, conduct
11 rigorous annual audits of the Pentagon, and end waste and fraud.

12
13 *Keeping Faith with Our Veterans and Military Families*

14
15 Democrats believe that our force is stronger when it reflects the richness and diversity of
16 American society, and when we treat our service members, veterans, and their families with the
17 dignity they've earned. We will protect and enhance opportunities for anyone who can meet the
18 standards to serve in combat roles, and we will fight the scourge of rape and sexual assault in our
19 military, end retaliation and impunity, and take care of survivors. We will reverse the Trump
20 Administration's hateful transgender ban and its policies that stigmatize and discriminate against
21 people living with HIV and AIDS. We will root out systemic racism from our military justice
22 system, where black service members are twice as likely as white ones to face court-martial. We
23 believe that service members, veterans, and their spouses should never face deportation. We will
24 create a parole process for veterans deported by the Trump Administration to reunite them with
25 their families and compatriots. And we believe anyone who has served honorably in our military
26 has earned a path to citizenship prior to discharge or retirement.

27
28 Democrats believe that the world's best fighting force and its veterans deserve the world's best
29 health care. We will rebuild trust in, and accountability at, the VA—not privatize it. We will
30 modernize VA facilities as part of a nationwide infrastructure plan. We will ensure that VA
31 benefits address the full needs of our women veterans, including reproductive services, and that
32 every veteran receives culturally competent care and benefits regardless of their ethnicity, race,
33 gender identity, or sexual orientation. We will combat veteran homelessness, including by
34 converting VA facilities into housing.

35
36 Twenty veterans and service members take their life every day. We will treat suicide as the
37 public health crisis it is. Today, only half of Afghanistan and Iraq veterans have access to the
38 mental health services they need. That's why we will invest in mental health and suicide
39 prevention services, and work with our military communities to encourage and support those
40 seeking help, connecting them to critical services. Democrats will provide the hundreds of
41 thousands of service members that transition to civilian life with the support they need.
42 Democrats will not abide exploitation of our veterans, especially by for-profit colleges that raid
43 benefits and burden veterans with debt.

44
45 Democrats believe that we can't maintain the force we need unless we take care of military
46 families—who have been asked to endure so much for so long, with far too little support. No

1 military family should struggle to pay their bills, put food on the table, or access health care,
2 quality housing, child care, or the workforce. We will ensure pay and compensation keep pace
3 with the current economy. We will also increase time between deployments, improve educational
4 outcomes for military children, and invest in career training, education, and entrepreneurship
5 programs for military spouses, who face an unemployment rate twice the national average. We
6 will expand tax credits to help family caregivers of our veterans, and ensure they receive the
7 support they need from the VA and Department of Defense.

8 9 *Civil-Military Relations*

10
11 Democrats believe that healthy civil-military relations are essential to our democracy and to the
12 strength and effectiveness of our military. We will end the Trump Administration's politicization
13 of the armed forces and distortion of civilian and military roles in decision-making. We will
14 reinstate national security policymaking processes that advance competent civilian control and
15 appropriately incorporate military advice—not issue commands by tweet. We will safeguard the
16 independence of the military justice system—not pardon war criminals.

17
18 Democrats will hold regular press briefings to explain the legal and policy justifications for
19 military operations, because transparency and open debate with Congress and the American
20 public are necessary for democratic accountability. Democrats will never use active duty soldiers
21 as political props, and we will never send military forces to suppress Americans exercising their
22 constitutional rights.

23 24 Mobilizing the World to Address Transnational Challenges

25 26 *Global Health and Pandemics*

27
28 The human and economic toll of the COVID-19 pandemic underscores the urgency of
29 strengthening the global public health system—and the consequences of America's
30 disengagement from the world. The Trump Administration was warned about the clear and
31 present danger of a global pandemic. The Administration not only ignored the threat but
32 dismantled our early warning and response mechanisms and failed to act when the pandemic
33 began. We owe it to all those whose lives have been shattered by this disease to learn from that
34 fatal mistake.

35
36 Democrats will take overdue steps to ensure our government is not caught off guard by public
37 health threats, at home or abroad. We will revitalize and expand the Obama-Biden
38 Administration's Global Health Security Agenda, and we will immediately restore the White
39 House National Security Council Directorate for Global Health Security and Biodefense.

40
41 Democrats will also mobilize allies, partners, and international institutions to develop a more
42 robust and effective global public health system. We will work to help the United Nations
43 improve its facilitation efforts in public health crises, and we will establish a Global Health
44 Emergency Board to harmonize crisis response for vulnerable communities.

1 Rather than undercutting the WHO and undermining its work on the frontlines of global
2 pandemic response, Democrats will ensure the United States remains its leading funder and
3 technical partner. Democrats will fully resource the WHO, especially its Contingency Fund for
4 Emergencies, while supporting fundamental reforms and mechanisms to enhance accountability
5 and protect experts from political pressure. We support the development of a vaccine accelerator
6 to ensure rapid, equitable, and affordable global access to vaccines, therapeutics, and supplies.

7
8 Democrats know that effective global health policy saves lives at home and around the world.
9 Beyond its immediate damage, the COVID-19 pandemic has badly disrupted routine, life-saving
10 vaccinations, putting 80 million children around the world at greater risk of dying from
11 preventable diseases. We will reaffirm our commitment to the President's Emergency Plan for
12 AIDS Relief and help realize the promise of an AIDS-free generation. And we will help the
13 world eradicate tuberculosis, malaria, and polio, as well as preventable maternal and childhood
14 deaths.

15 16 *Climate Change*

17
18 Democrats recognize that the United States does not stand alone in the fight against climate
19 change and global environmental degradation. We will fully integrate climate change into our
20 foreign policy and national security strategies, and we will restore U.S. global climate leadership.

21
22 Democrats will immediately rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement and convene a world summit
23 aimed at new and more ambitious global targets to reduce carbon pollution. We will revive and
24 expand climate-related foreign assistance including by recommitting to the Green Climate Fund.
25 We will protect our oceans—vital buffers against the impacts of climate change—through
26 fisheries management programs and additional designations of marine protected areas. We will
27 seek collaborative, science-based approaches to be good stewards of the rapidly changing Arctic
28 region, while protecting our strategic interests.

29
30 We will work to ratify the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and move expeditiously
31 to phase out super-polluting hydrofluorocarbons in the United States. We will restore funding to
32 the Global Environment Facility and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to support
33 critical climate science research around the world. We will support the protection of species and
34 wildlife habitats around the world, including by advancing the goals of the United Nations
35 Framework Convention on Biological Diversity, and encourage other countries to join us in
36 conserving 30 percent of the planet by 2030.

37
38 Democrats will also work with world leaders to catalyze increased global investments in clean
39 energy solutions and climate resilience, including to help low-income countries move along a
40 more sustainable development path. We will promote climate accountability and mobilize a
41 united front to keep states like China from outsourcing pollution to other countries.

42
43 Democrats believe that executing a strategy of bold climate leadership will require sustained
44 focus and increased expertise across our foreign policy institutions. We will incorporate climate
45 issues as key priorities at the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and in the
46 Intelligence Community. And we will ensure that America's service missions abroad, including

1 those executed through the Peace Corps and USAID, expand their calls to action to include
2 reducing carbon pollution, safeguarding Indigenous peoples and vulnerable populations from
3 climate impacts, and guaranteeing a more sustainable planet for all.

4 5 *Technology*

6
7 Democrats believe that American diplomatic leadership is critical to maximizing the benefits of
8 technological innovation while minimizing its risks and dislocations. We have a stake in bridging
9 the gap between the pace of innovation and the development of rules of the road governing the
10 most consequential domains of technology, from cyberspace to artificial intelligence to synthetic
11 biology. Democrats will avoid a race to the bottom, where countries hostile to democratic values
12 shape our future. Instead, we will mobilize public and private actors to ensure that new products
13 and new discoveries are bound by law, ethics, and civil liberties protections that enable
14 democratic societies to thrive and prosperity to be shared broadly.

15
16 We will recommit the United States to the principles of an open internet, including net neutrality,
17 and vigorously oppose efforts to digitally silo off countries and populations from the rest of the
18 world. Democrats believe that algorithms and platforms should empower people instead of the
19 surveillance state. We expect technology companies and social media platforms to take
20 responsibility and do more to identify foreign disinformation and preserve the openness of
21 democratic societies, and we will take steps to prevent the use of new technologies to facilitate
22 repression, spread hate, or incite violence.

23
24 Democrats recognize that the security of data is only becoming more vital across all threads of
25 technological progress. That's why we will work with our allies and partners to develop secure
26 5G networks and address threats in cyberspace. Democrats will maintain American capabilities
27 that can deter cyber threats, and we will work with other countries—and the private sector—to
28 protect individuals' data and defend critical infrastructure, including the global financial system.

29
30 We will also work to make sure that the revolution in biotechnology remains a force for global
31 good. We will promote international efforts to responsibly and ethically manage research in areas
32 like gene editing. We will sustain and improve international collaboration and data-sharing. And
33 we will ensure equitable access to medical treatments and vaccines generated by new biotech
34 discoveries. Democrats will partner with other countries and private companies to build up
35 capacity and implement appropriate safety standards for any work that involves dangerous
36 pathogens, and we remain staunchly committed to the international prohibition on the
37 development or use of biological weapons.

38 39 *Nonproliferation*

40
41 Democrats believe the United States has a moral responsibility and national security imperative
42 to prevent the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, and eventually secure their
43 elimination. Over the past four years, the Trump Administration has done precisely the opposite.
44 Its brash nuclear threats, ill-considered withdrawals from critical arms control treaties and
45 nuclear agreements, and reckless embrace of a new arms race have made the United States, and

1 the world, less safe. Thanks to President Trump’s abdication of leadership, the nuclear dangers
2 that Americans face are greater than they have been in decades.

3
4 Democrats reject a return to an old era of grave nuclear dangers.

5
6 Democrats believe that the sole purpose of our nuclear arsenal should be to deter—and, if
7 necessary, retaliate against—a nuclear attack, and we will work to put that belief into practice, in
8 consultation with our allies and military. We will work to maintain a strong, credible deterrent
9 while reducing our overreliance and excessive expenditure on nuclear weapons. The Trump
10 Administration’s proposal to build new nuclear weapons is unnecessary, wasteful, and
11 indefensible.

12
13 Democrats commit to strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,
14 maintaining the moratorium on explosive nuclear weapons testing, pushing for the ratification of
15 the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and extending New START. Just as was the case during the
16 height of the Cold War, it’s in our interest to work with Russia to verifiably limit and reduce our
17 nuclear stockpiles. We will build on this foundation to negotiate arms control agreements that
18 reflect the emergence of new players like China, capture new technologies, and move the world
19 back from the nuclear precipice.

20 21 *Terrorism*

22
23 So long as violent extremists continue to plot attacks on our homeland and our interests,
24 Democrats will maintain a vigilant focus on counterterrorism.

25
26 Democrats will sustain the global effort to defeat ISIS, al-Qaeda, and their affiliates. We will
27 ensure that the world is equally committed to the difficult task that follows military success:
28 dealing with the underlying conditions that allowed violent extremism to flourish in the first
29 place. We will work with our partners to prioritize diplomatic, law enforcement, and intelligence
30 tools, to reinforce our objectives instead of distorting them.

31
32 Democrats believe that our rhetoric, policies, and tactics—and those of our counterterrorism
33 partners—should never serve as terrorist recruiting tools. We will always work to avoid civilian
34 casualties, and we will not weaponize counterterrorism for anti-immigrant purposes. We will
35 reject the Trump Administration’s targeting of Muslims and work with, instead of vilifying,
36 Muslim communities at home and abroad. We will close the detention center at Guantanamo
37 Bay, enhance transparency, oversight, and accountability in counterterrorism programs and
38 operations, and safeguard civil liberties and the rule of law.

39
40 Democrats recognize that the threat landscape has evolved dramatically since September 11. Our
41 counterterrorism priorities, footprint, and tools should shift accordingly, including to respond to
42 the growing threat from white supremacist and other right-wing terrorist groups.

43 44 *Democracy and Human Rights*

1 Around the world, democracy and human rights are under greater assault than they have been in
2 a generation. Under President Trump, the United States has too often been part of the assault and
3 too rarely engaged in the defense and promotion of universal values. Democrats believe that the
4 fight for universal values should start at home, but it can't end there. Global democratic
5 backsliding and the erosion of human rights put our interests and values at risk. That's why the
6 reinvention of American leadership demands we put democratic values at the core of our foreign
7 policy, with renewed strategies and tools for a new era.

8
9 Democrats will make gender equality a key foreign policy priority and work to achieve gender
10 parity across our national security team. We will implement the Women, Peace, and Security Act
11 because advancing gender equality enhances stability and economic prosperity around the world.
12 Along with our diplomatic partners, we will incorporate more women into peace processes—
13 where their participation can improve the odds of a peace agreement holding—and ensure
14 women's leadership in peace and security processes globally. Democrats will lead international
15 efforts to address the scourge of gender-based violence, and we will work to ratify the
16 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. We will push
17 for greater participation by women in the global workforce, which studies show can boost global
18 GDP by 25 percent.

19
20 Democrats will always protect sexual and reproductive health and rights. We believe that
21 comprehensive health services, including access to reproductive care and abortion services, are
22 vital to the empowerment of women and girls. We will support the repeal of the Mexico City
23 Policy and measures like the Helms Amendment, which limit safe access to abortion. We will
24 also restore and expand American contributions to the United Nations Population Fund to help
25 guarantee access to health care for women and children around the world and eliminate child,
26 early, and forced marriage.

27
28 Democrats will advance the ability of all persons to live with dignity, security, and respect,
29 regardless of who they are or who they love. We will restore the United States' position of
30 leadership on LGBTQ+ issues by passing the GLOBE Act and appointing senior leaders directly
31 responsible for driving and coordinating LGBTQ+ issues at the State Department, USAID, and
32 the National Security Council. We will ensure that our immigration policies account for the
33 needs of LGBTQ+ refugees and asylum seekers, and that we use the full slate of human rights
34 promotion and accountability tools to defend the universal rights of LGBTQ+ people. We will
35 amplify the voices of LGBTQ+ persons around the world and counter violence and
36 discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons wherever it appears.

37
38 Democrats will stand up for and support civil society around the world. Crackdowns on civic
39 space in recent years have undermined democracy, the rule of law, and the vibrancy and health
40 of societies. As autocrats leverage technology and employ arbitrary legal measures to shrink
41 civic space, the United States should lead the world in adapting and bolstering support for civic
42 activism.

43
44 Democrats believe that the United States should defend freedom of the press. Independent media
45 is not the enemy of the people, but the guardian of democracy. We will push back against
46 erosion of press freedom wherever it occurs and in whatever form—whether through direct

1 intimidation of, and violence against, journalists or legal, regulatory, and financial pressures that
2 smother free speech.

3
4 We will fight human trafficking and strive to end the practice of modern-day slavery around the
5 world. We will aggressively leverage U.S. law enforcement and strengthen diplomatic efforts to
6 combat forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation. And we will increase visas for victims
7 of human trafficking at a time when mass migration has affected so many vulnerable
8 communities.

9
10 Democrats believe that improving labor standards around the world protects human rights and
11 promotes broad-based prosperity. We will ensure that America's diplomatic and trade
12 agreements include enforcement provisions for workers' rights, and we will fight to end the evils
13 of poverty-wage, child, and slave labor. We believe that American workers should not be
14 undercut by foreign competition that relies on the abuse of workers, and we will support the
15 rights of unions and workers abroad to organize, including International Labor Organization
16 Conventions supporting freedom of association and collective bargaining.

17
18 Democrats believe that America should be a world leader when it comes to disability rights. We
19 will work to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and we will appoint
20 a Special Envoy for International Disability Rights. Across American diplomatic and
21 development efforts, we will ensure that programs are disability-inclusive, and we will
22 encourage partner countries and international organizations to address the needs of persons with
23 disabilities.

24
25 Democrats believe that freedom of religion is a fundamental human right, and we will never use
26 protection of that right as a cover for discrimination. We will reverse the Trump
27 Administration's politicization of religious freedom in American foreign policy, and we
28 condemn atrocities against religious minorities around the world—from ISIS' genocide of
29 Christians and Yezidis, to China's mass internment of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities, to
30 Burma's persecution of the Rohingya.

31
32 Democrats believe that the United States should serve as a model for countries around the world
33 when it comes to safeguarding and promoting the rights of Indigenous peoples. We will reaffirm
34 the Obama-Biden Administration's support for, and strive to advance the principles of, the
35 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Consistent with the
36 Declaration, the United States should urge the United Nations and the Organization of American
37 States to create mechanisms that include the formal participation of Tribal nations.

38
39 Democrats will work to secure a better future for younger generations. Roughly 40 percent of the
40 world's population is under 25, and the proportion of young people is even higher in the
41 developing world. Democrats will ensure that our policies, and those of our partners and
42 development institutions, work to increase economic opportunities, expand education, and
43 improve health care for young people around the world. And we will pay special attention to
44 protecting the rights of youth and nurturing young leaders from vulnerable or underrepresented
45 communities.

46

1 Democrats believe that the United States has an urgent, moral obligation and strategic interest to
2 help alleviate suffering around the globe. Entrenched conflicts and unprecedented levels of
3 forced migration have pushed the world into an acute humanitarian crisis that spills across
4 borders. This year, almost 170 million people are going to need humanitarian assistance. By
5 2022 that figure could top 200 million, and need is poised to continue outstripping growth in
6 humanitarian funding and capacity. Democrats will reassert America’s humanitarian example
7 and leadership. We will contribute not just more aid, but better aid. The United States ought to
8 drive the international community in providing more strategic, coordinated, proactive,
9 predictable, and cost-effective funding—and in implementing programs that both reflect the
10 realities of today’s increasingly complex and protracted humanitarian emergencies, and deliver
11 on the health, education, and protection needs of populations devastated by conflict and
12 displacement.

13
14 In the midst of the worst forced displacement crisis since WWII, the Trump Administration
15 launched a campaign to undermine the global system that provides crucial assistance to refugees
16 and the countries that give them safe harbor.

17
18 Democrats will end the Trump Administration’s shameful efforts to close doors to the world’s
19 most vulnerable. We will reverse discriminatory bans and policies that deny protection to groups
20 based on their religion or sexual orientation. We will significantly raise the annual global refugee
21 admissions target, and work with Congress to create a minimum annual number for refugee
22 admissions, while expanding and identifying new pathways for refugees to seek safe havens.

23
24 Admitting refugees is not only the right thing to do—it’s the smart thing to do. Bringing in those
25 seeking a better life helps preserve the stability of America’s partners abroad, strengthens our
26 hand in getting other countries to uphold their obligations, grows our own economy, and enriches
27 our society.

28
29 Democrats believe that torture is immoral and ineffective. President Trump’s fondness for torture
30 and other war crimes only gives fodder to America’s enemies. Democrats will immediately
31 reaffirm the Obama-Biden Administration’s ban on torture and commit to upholding American
32 values at home and abroad. We will condemn the mistreatment of imprisoned individuals
33 wherever it occurs, and we will hold to account those who perpetrate human rights abuses.

34 35 Advancing American Interests

36 37 *Global Economy and Trade*

38
39 Democrats will fight for every American job and will make sure American workers have a fair
40 shot in the global economy.

41
42 For too long, the global trading system has failed to keep its promises to American workers. Too
43 many corporations have rushed to outsource jobs, and too many countries have reneged on
44 commitments to be honest and transparent partners.

45

1 We will not negotiate any new trade deals before first investing in American competitiveness at
2 home. We will aggressively enforce existing trade laws and agreements. And we will insist on
3 strong and enforceable standards for labor, human rights, and the environment in any future trade
4 agreements, so that they build the American middle class, create jobs, raise wages, and
5 strengthen our communities. We will use all tools at our disposal to take action against countries
6 that steal American intellectual property or manipulate their currencies to get an unfair advantage
7 in international markets.
8

9 Democrats believe that if the United States does not work with its allies and partners to shape the
10 terms of global trade, China will shape them for us—and American working families and the
11 middle class will pay the price. That’s why we will work with our allies to mobilize more than
12 half the world’s economy to stand up to China and negotiate from the strongest possible position.
13

14 Democrats believe that fighting for American workers also means pushing back against global
15 corruption, and we will make anti-corruption a priority in our foreign policy. The Trump
16 Administration’s own shady dealings and its enthusiasm for authoritarianism abroad have only
17 emboldened the world’s autocrats and kleptocrats. Democrats will implement new transparency
18 measures aimed at preventing illicit money from flowing through the American financial system,
19 including a ban on anonymous shell companies, expansions of anti-money laundering
20 requirements, disclosure of beneficial ownership, and greater oversight of cross-border
21 transactions. We will combat bribery abroad by expanding on the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act,
22 and we will deploy the full range of America’s diplomatic and economic tools to target
23 kleptocrats—including targeted sanctions and visa bans.
24

25 When used strategically—as one of the tools employed, alongside our allies, to achieve clear
26 policy objectives—financial and economic sanctions are an effective way to advance many core
27 U.S. national security objectives. But when misused and overused, sanctions not only undermine
28 our interests, they threaten one of the United States’ greatest strategic assets: the importance of
29 the American financial system. Democrats will guard against the improper application of
30 economic and financial sanctions that incentivize foreign businesses to bypass our financial
31 system, corrode the power and potential of sanctions, undercut the potential of our diplomacy,
32 hurt our economy, and threaten the key role of the U.S. dollar as the world’s reserve currency.
33

34 *Africa* 35

36 Democrats will revitalize our partnerships across Africa to unleash enormous potential for
37 growth and innovation and address together challenges and stresses across the continent. Africa
38 is home to some of the world’s fastest growing economies. Its population will roughly double to
39 more than two billion by the middle of this century, and Nigeria is projected to have the third
40 largest population in the world. American diplomacy can play a critical role in helping ensure
41 that the region’s vulnerabilities to climate change and pandemic disease—and persistent
42 problems of regional conflict, poor governance, and food, water, and health insecurity—do not
43 overwhelm its enormous opportunities.
44

45 At a moment when U.S.-Africa ties are increasingly important to our interests and our economy,
46 and when our friends and rivals are investing more resources and diplomatic attention across the
47 continent, the Trump Administration has treated Africa and its people with neglect and contempt.

1 We will repair our relationships with African partners and publics, renewing our commitment to
2 fight for democracy and human rights; advance peace and security; bolster economic growth and
3 public health; and promote clean energy, sustainable agriculture, and environmental protection.
4 Democrats will seize opportunities to strengthen fragile political transitions in Sudan and
5 Ethiopia while deepening relations with key partners. We will not shirk from our longstanding
6 pledge to assist countries in Central Africa, the Sahel, and the Horn of Africa to counter
7 extremism and address root causes of insecurity. We will support the implementation of the
8 African Continental Free Trade Agreement and promote a multi-faceted economic engagement
9 focused on increasing two-way and regional trade, promoting investment and partnership in key
10 industries. And we will assist in Africa's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic while
11 expanding efforts to improve the resiliency of health systems across the continent. Moreover, we
12 will stand in solidarity with our African counterparts against racism in the United States and
13 abroad, and commit to elevate African voices in multilateral forums to solve the world's most
14 pressing problems.

15 *Americas*

16
17
18 Democrats believe the Western Hemisphere is America's strategic home base—a region bound
19 together by common values, history, and vision of a more prosperous, democratic, and secure
20 future. When the United States hosts the region's leaders at next year's Summit of the
21 Americas—the first to be held here since the 1994 inaugural meeting in Miami—we will turn the
22 page on the Trump Administration's denigration and extortion of our neighbors, and we will
23 chart a new era of cooperation based on partnership and shared responsibility for the region we
24 all call home.

25
26 Democrats will reaffirm the importance of North America to U.S. global economic
27 competitiveness. We will ensure the USMCA lives up to its commitment to create prosperity for
28 American workers, and we will strictly enforce compliance with its labor and environmental
29 provisions. We will reinvigorate and build upon the North American Plan for Animal and
30 Pandemic Influenza launched under the Obama-Biden Administration and work with our
31 partners to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused the biggest economic
32 decline in history across Latin America and the Caribbean.

33
34 Rather than coerce our neighbors into supporting cruel migration policies, we will work with our
35 regional and international partners to address the root causes of migration—violence and
36 insecurity, weak rule of law, lack of educational and economic opportunity, pervasive corruption,
37 and environmental degradation. Rather than encourage climate denial and environmental
38 devastation, we will rally the world to protect the Amazon from deforestation, protect Indigenous
39 peoples, and help vulnerable nations in the Caribbean and Central America adapt to the impacts
40 of climate change. And rather than imitate populist demagogues, we will link arms with our
41 neighbors to realize our shared aspirations for the region's future.

42
43 We will reject President Trump's failed Venezuela policy, which has only served to entrench
44 Nicolás Maduro's dictatorial regime and exacerbate a human rights and humanitarian crisis. To
45 rise to the occasion of the world's worst refugee crisis and worst humanitarian crisis outside a
46 warzone in decades, the United States will mobilize its partners across the region and around the

1 world to meet the urgent needs of the people of Venezuela, and grant Temporary Protected
2 Status to Venezuelans in the United States. Democrats believe that the best opportunity to rescue
3 Venezuela’s democracy is through smart pressure and effective diplomacy, not empty, bellicose
4 threats untethered to realistic policy goals and motivated by domestic partisan objectives.
5

6 Democrats will also move swiftly to reverse Trump Administration policies that have
7 undermined U.S. national interests and harmed the Cuban people and their families in the United
8 States, including its efforts to curtail travel and remittances. Rather than strengthening the
9 regime, we will promote human rights and people-to-people exchanges, and empower the Cuban
10 people to write their own future.
11

12 *Asia-Pacific*

13
14 As a Pacific power, the United States should work closely with its allies and partners to advance
15 our shared prosperity, security, and values—and shape the unfolding Pacific Century.
16

17 Democrats’ approach to China will be guided by America’s national interests and the interests of
18 our allies, and draw on the sources of American strength—the openness of our society, the
19 dynamism of our economy, and the power of our alliances to shape and enforce international
20 norms that reflect our values. Undermining those strengths will not make us “tough on China.” It
21 would be a gift to the Chinese Communist Party.
22

23 Democrats will be clear, strong, and consistent in pushing back where we have profound
24 economic, security, and human rights concerns about the actions of China’s government.
25

26 Democrats will protect the American worker from unfair trade practices by the Chinese
27 government, including currency manipulation and maintaining a misaligned exchange rate with
28 the dollar, illegal subsidies, and theft of intellectual property. We will rally friends and allies
29 across the world to push back against China or any other country’s attempts to undermine
30 international norms.
31

32 Democrats believe the China challenge is not primarily a military one, but we will deter and
33 respond to aggression. We will underscore our global commitment to freedom of navigation and
34 resist the Chinese military’s intimidation in the South China Sea. Democrats are committed to
35 the Taiwan Relations Act and will continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues
36 consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people of Taiwan.
37

38 Rather than stand with President Xi Jinping as he cracks down on Hong Kong’s autonomy,
39 Democrats will stand for the democratic rights of its citizens. We will fully enforce the Hong
40 Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, including by sanctioning officials, financial
41 institutions, companies, and individuals responsible for undercutting Hong Kong’s autonomy.
42 And we will bring the world together to condemn the internment of more than one million
43 Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in concentration camps in China, using the tools provided
44 by the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act.
45

1 Democrats will pursue this strategy without resorting to self-defeating, unilateral tariff wars or
2 falling into the trap of a new Cold War. Those mistakes would only serve to exaggerate China's
3 weight, over-militarize our policy, and hurt American workers.

4
5 America must approach our relationship with China with confidence—the confidence to lead
6 international efforts to push back on malign behavior while also pursuing cooperation on issues
7 of mutual interest like climate change and nonproliferation and ensuring that the U.S.-China
8 rivalry does not put global stability at risk.

9
10 Rather than denigrate our partners and encourage tensions between our allies, the United States
11 will work to strengthen ties with and between our key allies in the region, including Japan, South
12 Korea, and Australia, and we will work to ensure that our alliances with Thailand and the
13 Philippines live up to the values that our peoples share.

14
15 Together with our allies—and through diplomacy with North Korea — we will constrain and
16 contain the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear program and its regional belligerence. We will
17 build a sustained, coordinated diplomatic campaign to advance the longer-term goal of
18 denuclearization. And we will not forget the people of North Korea—Democrats will support
19 humanitarian aid and pressure the regime to cease its gross human rights abuses.

20
21 We will reinvigorate our commitment to robust engagement with regional multilateral
22 institutions like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which will help us promote the rule
23 of law and sustainable, inclusive economic growth on both sides of the Pacific. And we will
24 continue to invest in our strategic partnership with India—the world's largest democracy, a
25 nation of great diversity, and a growing Asia-Pacific power.

26 27 *Europe*

28
29 In the 30 years since the fall of the Berlin wall, the United States and Europe have strived to
30 build a transatlantic community of free and democratic societies that works together to bring
31 peace, prosperity, and dignity to all our citizens. The Trump Administration has put that dream in
32 grave danger. Donald Trump either does not know or has forgotten who America's friends are.
33 He sees Europe as a foe—not a friend—of the United States. He sees Vladimir Putin's Russia as
34 a strategic partner—not a strategic rival. He sees anti-European Union, far-right nationalists as
35 political allies—not destructive antagonists.

36
37 Democrats, on the other hand, believe a united, democratic, and prosperous Europe is vital to the
38 United States. We believe the transatlantic alliance is the ballast of our global influence. Ours is
39 the largest economic relationship in the world, making up nearly half of global GDP. NATO is
40 the world's most formidable military alliance. And together, we stand as champions of universal
41 rights and freedoms around the world. Transatlantic cooperation is crucial to addressing almost
42 every global challenge we face.

43
44 Democrats will reinvigorate the transatlantic partnership to repair the damage of the Trump era
45 and preempt the risks of broader structural divergence between the U.S. and Europe. We will
46 work together with individual European countries and the European Union to counter threats to

1 our democracies and enhance shared resilience against corruption and kleptocracy. We will
2 support greater European integration, stronger defense capabilities, and greater energy security.
3 We will enhance our coordination and joint standard setting on technology, trade, and
4 investment, and we will work to boost our post-COVID-19 economic recovery and reduce
5 inequality.

6
7 Democrats will join our European partners in standing up to a revanchist Russia. We will not
8 allow Moscow to interfere in our democracies or chip away at our resolve. We will reaffirm
9 America's commitment to NATO and defending our allies. We will maintain transatlantic
10 support for Ukraine's reform efforts and its territorial integrity. Democrats will lower regional—
11 and global—threats by reinforcing nuclear arms control.

12
13 We believe Europe is our natural partner in managing areas of competition with China and will
14 work to establish common priorities, strategies, and tools. And just as we came together to stand
15 up to communism and respond to global terrorism, we will come together with Europe to
16 confront the existential challenge of climate change.

17 *Middle East*

18
19
20 Turning the page on two decades of large-scale military deployments and open-ended wars in the
21 Middle East does not mean the United States will abandon a region where we and our partners
22 still have enduring interests. Democrats believe it's past time, however, to rebalance our tools,
23 engagement, and relationships in the Middle East away from military intervention—leading with
24 pragmatic diplomacy to lay the groundwork for a more peaceful, stable, and free region.

25
26 Democrats will call off the Trump Administration's race to war with Iran and prioritize nuclear
27 diplomacy, de-escalation, and regional dialogue. Democrats believe the United States should not
28 impose regime change on other countries and reject that as the goal of U.S. policy toward Iran.
29 We believe the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) remains the best means to
30 verifiably cut off all of Iran's pathways to a nuclear bomb. The Trump Administration's
31 unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA isolated us from our allies and opened the door for Iran to
32 resume its march toward a nuclear weapons capacity that the JCPOA had stopped. That's why
33 returning to mutual compliance with the agreement is so urgent. The nuclear deal was always
34 meant to be the beginning, not the end, of our diplomacy with Iran. Democrats support a
35 comprehensive diplomatic effort to extend constraints on Iran's nuclear program and address
36 Iran's other threatening activities, including its regional aggression, ballistic missile program,
37 and domestic repression.

38
39 Democrats also believe we need to reset our relations with our Gulf partners to better advance
40 our interests and values. The United States has an interest in helping our partners contend with
41 legitimate security threats; we will support their political and economic modernization and
42 encourage efforts to reduce regional tensions. But we have no interest in continuing the blank-
43 check era of the Trump Administration, or indulging authoritarian impulses, internal rivalries,
44 catastrophic proxy wars, or efforts to roll back political openings across the region.

45

1 Effective relations with the Gulf will help us reconnect Iraq to its neighbors and protect the
2 country's stability, security, and sovereignty. Democrats support a small, finite, and focused
3 military presence to train our Iraqi partners so they can ensure the lasting defeat of ISIS. We also
4 support keeping up the offensive against ISIS in Syria to prevent it from regaining a foothold,
5 and will stand by Kurdish and other critical partners in that fight. We will work to repatriate
6 foreign fighter detainees, and reinvigorate diplomacy to protect the humanitarian needs of all
7 Syrians and find a political resolution for this horrific war.

8
9 Democrats believe a strong, secure, and democratic Israel is vital to the interests of the United
10 States. Our commitment to Israel's security, its qualitative military edge, its right to defend itself,
11 and the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding is ironclad.

12
13 Democrats recognize the worth of every Israeli and every Palestinian. That's why we will work
14 to help bring to an end a conflict that has brought so much pain to so many. We support a
15 negotiated two-state solution that ensures Israel's future as a Jewish and democratic state with
16 recognized borders and upholds the right of Palestinians to live in freedom and security in a
17 viable state of their own.

18
19 Democrats oppose any unilateral steps by either side—including annexation—that undermine
20 prospects for two states. Democrats will continue to stand against incitement and terror. We
21 oppose settlement expansion. We believe that while Jerusalem is a matter for final status
22 negotiations, it should remain the capital of Israel, an undivided city accessible to people of all
23 faiths. Democrats will restore U.S.-Palestinian diplomatic ties and critical assistance to the
24 Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza, consistent with U.S. law. We oppose any effort to
25 unfairly single out and delegitimize Israel, including at the United Nations or through the
26 Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement, while protecting the Constitutional right of our
27 citizens to free speech.