

Washington State Democratic Party Platform

Preamble

We are the Democrats, the party of the people, the party of good government.

We believe in the values of community, dignity, equality, fairness, respect, and tolerance.

We believe that through good government great things are accomplished. We pledge ourselves to a government that serves and protects its people, with liberty and justice for all.

We are dedicated to:

- Maintaining safety and security while seeking peace and cooperation;
- Sustainable stewardship of our environment;
- Fairness and economic opportunity, access to quality education and health care for all;
- Equal treatment of all before the law;
- Fiscal responsibility, integrity, openness and accountability in government;
- Personal freedom, security, and privacy;
- Respect, tolerance, and compassion for different belief systems and cultures.

We believe in putting our Democratic values into action and we encourage every citizen to join us in local civic involvement. We welcome support of our platform and help toward improving our quality of life and strengthening our democracy.

We adopt this platform to ensure that voters, candidates for public office, and public officials understand and support our goals.

Agriculture

Production of food is critical to national security. We are proud that agriculture is a leading industry in Washington State. We recognize the role of farmers as “stewards of the land,” and we support programs that ensure the availability of high-quality food, strengthen rural communities, preserve family farms and maintain the productivity of the land. This requires legislation that sustains farming when calamities occur and that ensures that farmers and farm workers earn a fair return on their efforts, are safe in doing that work, and produce food that is safe to eat.

We call for:

- Incentives to encourage the agricultural skills, careers, and lifestyles that are essential to our country’s survival;
- Preservation of agricultural land and natural resources critical to the viability of food, fuel, and forest production into the future;
- Adoption of sustainable agriculture and aquaculture that includes crop diversity and conservation;
- Improvement of agriculture through research and extension efforts, focusing on sustainable agriculture and small farms;
- Reduction of the use of herbicides, pesticides, and other toxic materials – including through organic farming;
- Increasing the inspections of both domestic and imported foods and livestock to ensure safe food;
- Adoption of clear food labeling standards, including where and how produced and any genetic modification(s);

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- 1 ▪ Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging the use of locally grown food
- 2 including in school meal programs and through local farmers' markets;
- 3 ▪ Production of biofuels to reduce greenhouse gases in ways that are sustainable, make sense
- 4 ecologically, and do not compete with food crops;
- 5 ▪ Decisions about water resources based on sound, credible scientific and economic
- 6 information;
- 7 ▪ Continuation of family farms between generations;
- 8 ▪ Allocation of equitable and fair farm subsidies;
- 9 ▪ Assisting farms and farm workers during periods of drought or other natural disasters.

Corporate Power and Media Reform

15 We believe that Corporations are important to our economy and standard of living, but that
16 government is created by, of and for the people, not corporations.

18 We call for:

- 19 ▪ Full enforcement of antitrust laws;
- 20 ▪ International trade based on fair trade including living wages and environmental protection;
- 21 ▪ Increasing export of manufactured goods and decreasing export of raw resource material;
- 22 ▪ Transparency in corporate accounting;
- 23 ▪ Strengthening and enforcement of laws against corporate crime, with penalties to include
- 24 incarceration of executives and revocation of corporate charters.

26 We oppose:

- 27 ▪ The Supreme Court precedent that corporations are people;
- 28 ▪ Corporations exerting undue influence on our government.

30 We believe that the free flow of information is fundamental to democracy. We believe the public
31 owns the broadcast frequencies and the Internet, which should be managed to serve the public
32 interest. We believe that internet neutrality is fundamental to preserving the value of the Internet for
33 the public.

35 We call for:

- 36 ▪ Diversity of ownership and programming as the primary principle of broadcast licensing;
- 37 ▪ Strengthening media ownership regulations to avoid corporate domination of our airwaves;
- 38 ▪ Encouraging minority and community media ownership;
- 39 ▪ Adequate, stable funding free of political pressure for public radio and public television;
- 40 ▪ Strengthening community-level, non-profit and non-commercial radio and TV;
- 41 ▪ Ensuring that rural Americans have access to a modern communications infrastructure.

Economic Justice and Development

46 We believe that economic justice for all is essential to the existence of a democratic society.
47 Favoritism toward the wealthiest has permitted them undue influence on public policy, to the
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- 1 ▪ Affordable access to Post-Secondary education;
- 2 ▪ Including Fine Arts and Physical Education in the Basic Education Act;
- 3 ▪ A curriculum that is scientifically accurate;
- 4 ▪ Math instruction that includes both arithmetic fluency and critical thinking skills;
- 5 ▪ Instructional freedom that is student-centered within the approved P-12 curriculum;
- 6 ▪ Simple majority to pass school bonds;
- 7 ▪ Public education employees' rights to organize, engage in collective bargaining, and strike
- 8 without fear of reprisal or replacement;
- 9 ▪ A new, stable funding formula for public schools and capital projects;
- 10 ▪ Abandoning the WASL as a mandatory high school graduation requirement;
- 11 ▪ Parental participation that supports student learning;
- 12 ▪ Full funding for school transportation.

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14 We oppose:

- 15 ▪ Charter Schools and vouchers;
- 16 ▪ The commercial exploitation of students;
- 17 ▪ Linking military recruitment to educational funding;
- 18 ▪ Organized prayer in public schools;
- 19 ▪ "No Child Left Behind";
- 20 ▪ Basing teacher pay on student test scores.

Energy and the Environment

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26 We must strive to be responsible stewards of the environment, our communities, and our planet. All
27 people, including future generations, have the right to clean air and water, uncontaminated food,
28 and a healthy natural environment.

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30 We believe that:

- 31 ▪ Our long-term economic stability, world peace, and the health of our environment rest on
- 32 both short-term and long-term planning.
- 33 ▪ Sound policies decisions must incorporate the best scientific evidence;
- 34 ▪ Sustainable energy production and strong environmental protections strengthen our
- 35 economy and our country.

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37 We call for:

- 38 ▪ The United States and Washington State taking the lead with international efforts to reduce
- 39 greenhouse gases and mitigate climate change;
- 40 ▪ Creative mechanisms to encourage energy conservation and use of efficient, renewable, and
- 41 environmentally responsible energy, including widespread research, development, and use
- 42 of energy efficient and renewable sources of power including solar, wind, and other
- 43 distributed technologies;
- 44 ▪ Increasing energy conservation including raising fuel efficiency standards for all vehicles;
- 45 ▪ Permitting expansion of nuclear power only when our environment is protected and when
- 46 safe, long-term waste management can be guaranteed;
- 47 ▪ Public control and ownership of water, energy and waste management infrastructure;
- 48 ▪ Conserving resources and promoting sustainability through recycling and waste reduction
- 49 efforts;

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- 1 ▪ Public discussion at all levels of community and government about how to reduce resource
 - 2 material and energy consumption, including potable water;
 - 3 ▪ Practices by individuals, government, tribes and corporations that protect and conserve our
 - 4 environment and repair degraded areas;
 - 5 ▪ Long-term policies that promote biodiversity, ecosystem and watershed protection, and
 - 6 restoration of wild salmon and endangered species;
 - 7 ▪ Managing population and growth intelligently, limiting urban sprawl, and preserving
 - 8 farmland, wildlife habitat, and natural resources as essential to our economic and
 - 9 environmental well-being;
 - 10 ▪ Protecting our critical environmental areas, including wilderness areas, old growth forests,
 - 11 wildlife habitat areas and corridors, wetlands, streams, riparian areas, the Columbia river,
 - 12 Puget Sound, coastlines, and oceans, through vigilant monitoring and planned growth
 - 13 management;
 - 14 ▪ Managing public lands as a public trust for the benefit of all;
 - 15 ▪ Prohibiting mineral exploration and extraction, and waste disposal, storage or treatment in
 - 16 wildlife refuges, wilderness areas, national parks or sensitive areas;
 - 17 ▪ Cleanup to the highest federal and state standards of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation and
 - 18 protection of the Columbia River.
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Foreign Policy

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24 The United States should lead by example and work within the world community in a spirit of
25 peace, cooperation, and generosity, using democratic ideals with diplomacy and mutual respect
26 rather than force.

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28 We believe:

- 29 ▪ In order to promote a sustainable, nonviolent world, the United States must promote human
- 30 welfare and a healthy environment for all peoples;
- 31 ▪ We must refuse to conduct preemptive war and must make nonviolence the primary
- 32 organizing principle of our foreign policy;
- 33 ▪ There is substantial evidence the war against Iraq was an unjustified war based on false and
- 34 misleading statements and faulty thinking that has led to the death and injury of countless
- 35 thousands of U.S. servicemen and women and innocent Iraqi civilians, and has made the U.S.
- 36 and other nations less safe from terrorism;
- 37 ▪ The United States must lead or support international efforts to prevent or stop genocide, in
- 38 Darfur and elsewhere;
- 39 ▪ In building a more peaceful and stable world through international efforts to address root
- 40 causes of conflict, which include poverty, natural resource shortages, economic injustice, and
- 41 environmental degradation;
- 42 ▪ The United States should provide proportionate assistance in international and poverty crisis
- 43 situations.
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45 We call for:

- 46 ▪ Human and civil rights throughout the world, and oppose the support or creation of regimes
- 47 that suppress those rights;
- 48 ▪ Nonviolent conflict resolution and the pursuit of peace;

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- 1 ▪ A genuine, open multilateral approach to foreign policy;
- 2 ▪ Cooperative participation in the United Nations and the full payment of our U.N. dues, the
- 3 signing and ratification of the U.N. agreement forming an International Criminal Court, and
- 4 the recognition of its jurisdiction, and honoring the original United Nations Universal
- 5 Declaration of Human Rights;
- 6 ▪ The signing of the Mine Ban Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and complying
- 7 with the Geneva Conventions, the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions, and other
- 8 international treaties protecting civilian populations and addressing climate change;
- 9 ▪ Providing effective foreign aid to reduce poverty, improve health and education, and
- 10 provide access to safe water and food;
- 11 ▪ Restoring programs that support family planning worldwide;
- 12 ▪ Fair trade among nations based on sound environmental principles;
- 13 ▪ Renegotiation of treaties such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the
- 14 Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) and the North American Free Trade
- 15 Agreement (NAFTA) that fail to promote human rights, labor rights and environmental
- 16 protections;
- 17 ▪ An expeditious and orderly withdrawal of U.S. military forces and bases from Iraq
- 18 conducted so as to do least harm to the peoples of that country, redirecting U.S. efforts
- 19 toward helping the Iraqis repair their infrastructure and toward improving the stability of
- 20 the region, and encouraging multilateral diplomatic efforts to create and preserve peace in
- 21 the region;
- 22 ▪ Strengthening the international mission in Afghanistan in order to support its fledgling
- 23 democracy as an independent state, quell violence, assist in their efforts to replace the
- 24 production of opium with constructive revenue-producing crops, and eliminate centers of
- 25 terrorism based in the region;
- 26 ▪ Using our government's full influence, through serious, constructive and persistent
- 27 engagement, to promote negotiations and other actions that will lead to a successful,
- 28 sustainable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on mutual recognition, that
- 29 ensures security, economic growth, and quality of life for the peoples of the sovereign state
- 30 of Israel and a sovereign state of Palestine;
- 31 ▪ A cooperative multinational effort, using diplomacy and avoiding unilateral military action,
- 32 to bring Iran into a closer harmony with the community of nations and to peacefully resolve
- 33 its potential threats to the stability of the region;
- 34 ▪ Prohibiting U.S. companies from engaging in practices abroad that would be prohibited at
- 35 home, such as dumping of products and importing products made by exploiting the
- 36 environment, local communities and people;
- 37 ▪ Prohibiting multinational corporations, their affiliates, subsidiaries and/or franchises from
- 38 operating above the international rule of law;
- 39 ▪ The end of the economic blockade and restrictions on travel to Cuba, and normalization of
- 40 relations with Cuba.
- 41 ▪ Closing the School of the Americas, also known as the Western Hemispheric Institute for
- 42 Security Cooperation;
- 43 ▪ Reduction of nuclear arsenals, strengthening international control of fissile material, and
- 44 nonproliferation of nuclear weapons by limiting use of fissile material to peaceful purposes.
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We oppose:

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- 1 ▪ The production, testing, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons, as well as the development
- 2 of new or enhanced nuclear weapons;
- 3 ▪ The use of depleted uranium as a weapon;
- 4 ▪ Extraordinary rendition, the abducting of persons of any nationality and their detention in
- 5 secret prisons where they may be tortured, as illegal and immoral.
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Government and Political Reform

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11 We believe that our government derives its legitimacy solely from the people. We are committed to
12 a representative democracy that encourages maximum participation, a voting process that is
13 legitimate, fair, transparent, and open to all citizens, and a principle that requires the responsibility
14 of voters and those whom they elect.

15
16 We believe:

- 17 ▪ We must restore the balance of power among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches
- 18 of our Federal government and completely restore Constitutional rights;
- 19 ▪ We must restore and preserve the integrity of our electoral processes throughout the nation;
- 20 ▪ The commonwealth should be used to support the common good; taxes should be levied
- 21 fairly and spent frugally; and a balanced budget should be a high priority;
- 22 ▪ Government should be conducted honestly, transparently, and fairly for the benefit of all,
- 23 and protected from undue influence by special interests.
- 24

25 We call for:

- 26 ▪ Conducting all elections either with carefully supervised paper ballots or open-source
- 27 software, with a verifiable record of all votes;
- 28 ▪ Guaranteed access for all military service members and American government workers
- 29 overseas to voting in all elections;
- 30 ▪ Curtailing the influence of special interests on our political processes, including contribution
- 31 and spending limits, as an integral part of campaign finance reforms;
- 32 ▪ The implementation of the Help America Vote Act;
- 33 ▪ Public financing of campaigns and full disclosure of sources of all campaign funds;
- 34 ▪ Full Congressional representation for residents of the District of Columbia;
- 35 ▪ Inclusive campaign and debate processes that do not exclude credible third party or so-called
- 36 second-tier candidates;
- 37 ▪ Reinstatement of laws requiring broadcast license holders to provide adequate equal airtime
- 38 to political candidates as a condition of their FCC license, and reinstatement of the Fairness
- 39 Doctrine;
- 40 ▪ Reforms that would result in election of the President of the United States by popular vote,
- 41 accurately reflecting the will of the majority of our nation's voters;
- 42 ▪ Significantly shortening the process of selecting Presidential nominees and allowing for
- 43 accessible and meaningful citizen participation;
- 44 ▪ Immediate restoration of voting rights of felons upon completion of parole;
- 45 ▪ Restrictions on former state and federal elected officials from lobbying for 4 years after
- 46 leaving office;

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- 1 ▪ A unified electronic medical record system that safeguards patient privacy, while enabling a
2 seamless transfer of information between portals of care and providing a more accurate way
3 to assess clinical outcomes;
- 4 ▪ Freedom of choice in our own health care, including the choice of a personal physician to
5 provide coordinated care with continuity;
- 6 ▪ A strong patient bill of rights, including the right to refuse care;
- 7 ▪ Public health policy based on sound scientific guidelines following recommendations of the
8 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
- 9 ▪ Increasing the supply of health care providers with incentives for working in primary care as
10 well as underserved communities and populations;
- 11 ▪ Increasing funding for medical research based on scientific merit, not a political agenda;
- 12 ▪ Increasing funding and support of international family planning agencies within the United
13 Nations.

14
15 We oppose:

- 16 ▪ “Cherry picking” of patients, conditions, or coverage;
- 17 ▪ The linking of health care coverage solely to employment; health insurance must be portable
18 between jobs and when unemployed;
- 19 ▪ “Pre-existing conditions” clauses in insurance policies;
- 20 ▪ Spend-down requirements for persons eligible for Supplemental Security Income and Social
21 Security Disability Insurance before they can receive Medicaid.

22 23 24 25 Human Rights, Civil Rights and Human Services

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27 We recognize that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all human beings are
28 the foundations of freedom, justice and peace in the world. The strength of our democracy rests on
29 the rights and responsibilities set forth in the *U.S. Constitution*, the “Bill of Rights” and the
30 subsequent Amendments to the Constitution. Food, shelter, privacy, education, employment
31 opportunities and access to quality health care are essential to ensuring basic human rights.

32
33 We believe:

- 34 ▪ Discrimination of any kind is wrong; those who face discrimination must be afforded the
35 legal means and economic opportunities to overcome such injustice;
- 36 ▪ We have the right to sovereignty over our own bodies;
- 37 ▪ Everyone has the right to die with dignity;
- 38 ▪ Marriage, as a legal union of consenting adults, should not be restricted by sexual orientation
39 or gender identity;
- 40 ▪ Our government must accept its responsibility to provide a safety net of social services to
41 meet the people’s needs regardless of their national or racial origin;
- 42 ▪ Public assistance is necessary to safeguard the vulnerable poor and people with disabilities
43 who cannot reasonably provide for themselves;
- 44 ▪ In the separation of social services from faith-based requirements;
- 45 ▪ The Geneva Conventions must be applied to all detainees, foreign or domestic, no matter
46 where they are held.

47
48 We call for:

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- 1 ▪ Proactive efforts by the Democratic Party to involve people of color and other marginalized
- 2 groups in the democratic process;
- 3 ▪ Religious freedom and the constitutional separation of church and state;
- 4 ▪ Respecting the rights of all adults including seniors and individuals with disabilities to direct
- 5 their own lives in housing, education and all other life choices;
- 6 ▪ Adding enforcement provisions to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;
- 7 ▪ The right to confidentiality of medical records and genetic information.
- 8 ▪ The end of human trafficking for the sex trade or other forms of involuntary servitude;
- 9 ▪ Family planning and reproductive rights including a woman's right to choose regardless of
- 10 age or ability to pay;
- 11 ▪ Strong legislation, treatment programs and education designed to reduce harassment,
- 12 intimidation, and domestic or sexual violence;
- 13 ▪ Galvanizing the public will to end homelessness.

14
15 We oppose:

- 16 ▪ Discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodation, military service, insurance,
- 17 licensing or education based on race, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation,
- 18 gender identity, disability, physical attributes, political affiliation or national origin;
- 19 ▪ All forms of torture;
- 20 ▪ The misuse of private data by corporations and institutions.

Immigration

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26 Immigrants have historically strengthened America and continue to do so. We applaud cultural
27 pluralism and believe that all people, regardless of their country of origin or their legal status,
28 deserve to be treated fairly, respectfully, and with dignity, and that all people have a right to equal
29 treatment under the law. Immigrants to the United States should be helped in a systematic manner
30 to know how and be able to live productive lives in our society.

31
32 We call for:

- 33 ▪ Comprehensive reform of immigration policy, providing all immigrants a speedier pathway
- 34 toward legal status;
- 35 ▪ Due process to be provided in all immigration proceedings;
- 36 ▪ Policies that more fully integrate and support immigrants as equal members of our
- 37 communities, affording immigrants and their children equal access to education, social
- 38 services, and employment opportunities free of exploitation;
- 39 ▪ Programs offering immigrants instruction in English;
- 40 ▪ Making the process of confirming immigration status readily available to employers;
- 41 ▪ Enforcement of the laws which penalize employers who knowingly employ
- 42 undocumented immigrants;
- 43 ▪ Safe and adequate housing, medical care, education and sanitary facilities for migrant
- 44 workers.

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46 We oppose:

- 47 ▪ Policies that deny civil and/or human rights or educational opportunities for immigrants
- 48 and their children;
- 49 ▪ State or local police involvement in the enforcement of federal immigration laws;

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- 1 ▪ Efforts to deputize, commission, finance, or otherwise encourage vigilante border militia
- 2 groups in the United States;
- 3 ▪ Deportation or detention of any person without regard for the needs of their dependents;
- 4 ▪ Legislative attempts to establish English as the sole official language of the United States.

Indian Tribes and Sovereignty

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10 Indian tribes share a common history with the United States. American Indian Tribal Governments
11 make up a part of our national identity and community. We recognize them as self-determining,
12 self-governing, and separate governments. Local, state, and federal governments must respect the
13 decisions of the Native American Nations and tribal governments, affirm their rights derived from
14 treaties and state compacts, and oppose attempts to diminish their sovereignty and cultures.

15
16 We call for:

- 17 ▪ Upholding treaties or tribal agreements by any party.
- 18 ▪ Continued efforts to maintain and restore salmon runs and protect shellfish resources that
- 19 are critical to Indian needs;
- 20 ▪ The preservation and protection of sites of historic, cultural and religious significance;
- 21 ▪ Local, state, and federal governments to help improve the social, economic, and health status
- 22 of American Indian people and tribes to a level equivalent to that of other Americans.
- 23 ▪ Educating the American public about the inherent and treaty-based rights of Indian tribes,
- 24 which is vital to respectful and civil relations between Indian tribes and local communities,
- 25 the state and the nation.

Labor

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31 A strong economy is based upon jobs that provide safe working conditions, a fair and living wage,
32 and health and retirement benefits. The benefits are obtained and ensured by workers' rights to
33 organize unions for collective bargaining.

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35 We believe:

- 36 ▪ Workers are dedicated, industrious and competitive;
- 37 ▪ Workers deserve respect and a livable wage;
- 38 ▪ Workers must have a safe and harassment free work environment;
- 39 ▪ Workers must have the enforced right to organize and collectively bargain in order to have
- 40 livable wages;
- 41 ▪ Workers must have retirement benefits transportable between employers;
- 42 ▪ Workers need to have better access to education and training in order to be competitive in a
- 43 world market of jobs;
- 44 ▪ Workers who "blow the whistle" must be given access to courts and protected from
- 45 retaliation.

46
47 We call for:

- 48 ▪ Prevailing wage laws for work under government contracts;
- 49 ▪ Area standards for wages and benefits;

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- The elimination of excessive, unnecessary and redundant programs and weapons, such as Star Wars and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Shield, from the military budget and investing the savings in other pressing domestic or military needs.

We oppose:

- The federal use of the National Guard for any purposes other than defense, enforcement of a court order or response to natural disaster;
- Any religious, racial, sexual, and gender-based harassment, and we demand that offenders be disciplined;
- The imposition of hardships on military and National Guard families by policy that unreasonably extends deployments, straining marriages, separating parents and children, and contributing to unprecedented numbers of suicides among military personnel;
- The militarization of space.

Transportation

We believe that an efficient, flexible and far-sighted transportation system is vital to healthy communities, a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

We call for:

- Significant public input and oversight into major transportation public works;
- The development and use of alternative energy;
- Policies and public funding that make travel as safe and efficient as possible for all modes of transportation, motorized and non-motorized;
- Accessible transportation for all, including providing safe, affordable, and efficient bus and rail services for persons with disabilities;
- Investments in public infrastructure that broaden individuals' multimodal transportation choices;
- Encouraging the development and use of alternative energy;
- Instituting measures to reduce pollution and dependence on fossil fuels, including increased fuel efficiency standards for all vehicles;
- Land use planning that works toward the goal of decreasing the need to drive.

We oppose:

- Any subsidy of selected portions of the highway/transportation system (in the form of taxes or usage fees) that unreasonably burden citizens in certain areas of Washington State, such as ferries and toll bridges.