

THURSTON COUNTY DEMOCRATS PARTY PLATFORM AS AMENDED AND ADOPTED APRIL 19, 2008

Our nation is at a crossroads.

We can choose a new economic road, a responsible road to sustainable prosperity; or we can continue with the same policies that have brought us a crumbling economy. **We choose prosperity.**

We can rebuild our military, economic, and moral strength through a just and secure peace; or we can continue to squander our national treasure – including our precious sons and daughters – in a bogged-down war in Iraq. **We choose strength. We choose peace.**

We can choose to reinvigorate the American Dream of fairness and equal opportunity; or we can continue to allow our tax system to pit the haves against the have-nots and provide subsidies to huge corporations. **We choose fairness. We choose equality.**

We can use what we know to prevent social problems, laying a foundation for true economic and social justice; or we can continue to tolerate a system that abandons our minority communities and sends more young men to prison than to college. **We choose justice.**

We can reaffirm our founders' faith that we are all created equal, and choose the path of unity; or we can continue to listen to those who fan the flames of fear, using race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation to divide us. **We choose unity.**

We can accept our responsibility to clean up our environmental mistakes and missteps and leave our grandchildren a legacy of clean air, fertile soil, and pure water; or we can continue to watch while pollution and global warming become more harmful and costly with each passing day. **We choose responsibility.**

We choose prosperity. We choose strength. We choose peace. We choose fairness. We choose equality. We choose justice. We choose unity. We choose responsibility. We are the Democrats of Thurston County, and this is what we believe:

True National Security and Support for Our Veterans

We believe that America, at its best, has always stood as a symbol of freedom, justice, and human rights throughout the world. The current national administration has betrayed that proud tradition.

- The citizens of America were led into this war in Iraq under false pretenses. This war has distracted us from the real and necessary fight against terrorism, and created instead a breeding ground for future terror. This administration has betrayed our dedicated men and women in uniform. **This war must end.**
- America's foreign policy should not be based on building an empire through violence and coercion. Instead, it should be based on building a united international community through wise diplomacy and strong alliances to combat our true international enemies: ignorance, disease, and poverty.
- Our returning wounded have been abandoned by the current administration. We must forever honor and stand by the brave men and women who have served our nation, and assure their full return to health and productivity when their military years are done. **We must do our duty to those who did theirs.**

Economic Freedom

We believe in the American Dream. We support the well-regulated, responsible free enterprise system that made America the Land of Opportunity. We reject the short-sightedness, greed, and fiscal irresponsibility that have undermined America's economic security.

- We support balanced budgets, strict government accountability, and wise fiscal stewardship.
- We support small businesses and local enterprises over those multinational corporations that choose to exploit workers and environments abroad and do nothing for the community at home.
- While some say American businesses cannot afford the switch to clean energy, we say American businesses cannot afford to miss the economic opportunity of building a new economy. **We trust entrepreneurship, innovation, and American ingenuity to build a new, sustainable economic system based on clean, renewable energy.**

Economic Justice

We believe in an America that aspires to be a land of fairness and opportunity. The social contract that unites us all is undermined when a corporate CEO earns in one day what a line worker earns in a year.

- The engine that brought prosperity to America's middle class in the 20th century was a strong Labor Movement. We support a strong and reinvigorated Labor Movement today.
- We support compassion for the economically less fortunate, and the right of everyone to earn a living wage for a hard day's work.
- We demand that international trade agreements include strong protections for the environment, worker safety, and all workers' rights to organize.

Healthcare for All

We believe – as Democrats have always believed – that it is our responsibility as citizens to care for one another. America's healthcare system has failed the fundamental tests of fairness and equality, and it must be reformed.

- We believe that government – in partnership with medical professionals – must create a unified system that gives every American access to high-quality, affordable health care.
- Health care decisions should be based on sound medicine and proven science, not bureaucratic rules or profit.
- Costs should be cut by focusing on health education and preventative care, reducing overhead and paperwork, and eliminating unnecessary care.

Excellence in Education

We believe that education is the foundation of our economic prosperity, of our national security, and indeed of our democracy itself. We have a responsibility to our children to provide excellence and innovation in education.

- All children, rich and poor, deserve access to a high-quality public education, tailored to their different needs and the different ways they learn. College must be affordable for all.
- Because it truly does take a village to raise a child, the community must be involved in its schools. Educators build community trust by upholding the highest standards of educational and fiscal accountability.

- While testing ensures that minimum standards are met, schools must not focus on “teaching to the test.” Instead, our focus must be on preparing students for careers, higher education, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning.

A Restored Democracy

We believe that, above all, America stands for freedom. Freedom is what our founders pledged their lives to gain and what every generation since has stepped forward to defend. Today, our freedom – and the very integrity of our democratic system – has been put at risk by the current administration’s reckless policies and careless disregard of the law.

- The President, Congress, and Supreme Court – all who swear to defend the Constitution – must be held accountable when they fail to do so. All government officials must be held to the highest standards of ethical conduct.
- We must reverse the current administration’s overexpansion of presidential power and completely restore every citizen’s precious civil liberties.
- We demand that sovereignty be restored to the American people. Elections must be decided by the will of all the people, not the contributions of a few. **Above all, our elections must be open and honest, and every vote must count.**

A Clean Environment and an End to Global Warming

We believe that we bear the responsibility to preserve our world. We have no higher duty than to pass on to future generations a legacy of pure water, clean air, fertile soil, a safe food supply, and sufficient resources to meet their needs.

- We must join with nations around the globe in a fair and comprehensive effort to halt and ultimately reverse global warming. We must combat efforts to distort and misrepresent science.
- We must mobilize a massive and dramatic national campaign to achieve energy self-sufficiency by ending our reliance on fossil fuels. This is not just an environmental imperative; it is critical for maintaining a vibrant economy, guaranteeing our national security, and preventing war.
- We must take immediate action to remove toxic chemicals from the human food chain. We cannot continue to allow ourselves and our children to be poisoned through carelessness or greed.

Prosperity.

Strength.

Peace.

Fairness.

Equality.

Justice.

Unity.

Responsibility.

We stand for these values – the values for which our nation was founded.

We stand for these values – the values women and men crossed continents and oceans to attain.

We stand for these values – the values generations of Americans have lived, and worked, and fought, and died for.

Our nation has been falsely led astray, but we intend to lead it home.

We are the Democrats of Thurston County, and we have come to take our country back.