



## ***PRELIMINARY PLATFORM REPORT***

After writing our first official platform in 2015, we have continued to expand and amended our platform to include breadth of issues. The debate was spirited and the new planks reaffirmed our commitment to progressive values. This year, we'll adopt “statements of principle” for each area listed below (Economic Justice, Social Justice, etc.). These statements of principle should sum up our values on each topic. You can also propose new platform planks! Submissions (see the link at the top of this document) will be debated in the Platform Committee meeting at Convention. I know that as Young Democrats we stand firm in our convictions so the discussion is sure to be a lively one! The proposed platform for 2018 is below:

### **I. Preface**

#### **A) We support:**

1. An analysis of justice that recognizes that social, economic, and environmental justice are all interdependent on each other, and that any policies in the pursuit of justice must be intersectional.

### **II. Economic Justice**

#### **A) We support:**

1. A living wage that is indexed to inflation as a right for all workers.
2. The rights of workers to a safe and healthy work environment.
3. All public and private workers' rights to organize and use mediation, arbitration, or strikes when necessary to resolve disputes.
4. The repeal of the right-to-work law.
5. A major increase in funding for maintenance and construction of affordable and low-income housing in Arkansas.
6. Equal opportunity employment laws that prohibit hiring and workplace discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, creed, religion, disability, political affiliation, affiliation with organized labor, or veteran status.
7. Equal pay for equal work, regardless of an individual's status as a member of one of

- the protected classes listed in clause six.
8. Social welfare programs that allow individuals to support themselves and their families and reflect individuals' right to an adequate standard of living.
  9. A progressive income tax system for individuals that lowers the tax burden for working-class and middle-class Arkansans, ensures that the wealthy pay their fair share with no loopholes, and is used to pay for redistributionary social welfare programs.
  10. Strengthening Social Security and preserving hard-earned pensions as they are bedrocks of a dignified retirement.
  11. Continuing Medicaid and Medicare as a guaranteed right for those who qualify and working to expand accessibility
  12. The understanding that free and accessible healthcare, education, childcare, a clean environment, and public infrastructure are essential to economic justice and equal opportunity.

**B) We Oppose:**

1. The exploitation of undocumented immigrant laborers by refusing to pay them minimum wage and give them fair benefits.
2. Wage theft, and all anti-labor policies that abet this practice.

### **III. Social Justice**

**A) We support:**

1. The allocation of public funding to drastically increase the quantity and quality of resources available for victims of sexual assault and harassment at colleges and universities, in K-12 education, and in the public and private sectors of the workforce.
2. Policies that create a publicly accessible system where victims of sexual assault and harassment can file complaints against the person they are accusing anonymously and with ease, and where their complaints are adjudicated independently and by a panel composed of individuals of mixed gender.
3. Mandatory in-depth courses at the K-12 and collegiate levels (substantially more than currently required) and trainings in the workforce, that educate individuals on the issues of affirmative consent and sexual assault, and about how gender stereotypes perpetuate a rape culture.
4. Affirmative action policies designed to ensure that structural oppression does not prevent qualified persons from obtaining education, employment, promotion, housing, insurance, or any other social good.
5. A woman's, intersex person's, and non-binary person's constitutional right to choose to have an abortion, as protected by the U.S. Constitution, which should not be restricted by age, ability to pay, or any other undue burden; and we should work to expand accessibility and funding across the state.
6. A pathway to citizenship for all undocumented immigrants, conditional on them working and not committing any felony, as we recognize that they are not taking

anyone's job, but are seeking opportunity and will continue to be taken advantage of by corporations unless they have status as citizens.

7. Family members of immigrants, nuclear or extended, being given priority for immigration to the United States, as families should be united.
8. The promotion of progressive individuals running for office who are not cisgender, straight, white men in order to topple structural oppression in the political arena.
9. Establishing a commission to study the residual effects of slavery on today's society and determine what forms of reparation would be just and tangible.
10. The implementation of gender neutral restrooms in government facilities and public institutions of learning.
11. The programs of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), including educational and preventive initiatives, especially those that serve women at risk of sexual and domestic violence.
12. The sovereignty of Native American tribal governments and the Federal Government's trust obligation to Native American people.
13. The inclusion of language in state and federal anti-discrimination law that ensures the rights of intersex individuals and prohibits discrimination based on gender identity, characteristics, and expression.
14. The implementation of gender neutral restrooms in government facilities and public institutions of learning.
15. Anybody who is qualified, regardless of their identity, being allowed to join the military.

**B) We oppose:**

1. Any effort to undermine the separation of church and state as it is essential to the religious freedom of all Americans.
2. The deportation of any non-felon individuals, as we strongly oppose splitting families apart.

#### **IV. Criminal Justice & Law**

**A) We support:**

1. Legislation, treatment programs, and education designed to reduce domestic violence and child abuse. We believe each person has the right to life free from fear of fear of physical or emotional injury.
2. Laws that ensure convicted domestic abusers and other violent felons are not allowed to purchase or bear firearms.
3. The abolition of capital punishment.
4. That the criminal justice system should focus on education and rehabilitation rather than punishment and that we feel all civil rights should be restored after they have completed their rehabilitation program.
5. The decriminalization of marijuana.
6. The affordable access of all Arkansans, regardless of their wealth, to medical marijuana per the Arkansas Constitution.
7. The restoration of the right of nonviolent felons to vote
8. Safety locks on handguns, prohibition of importation and ownership of fully-automatic weapons, and strengthening of laws holding adults responsible for

safeguarding guns at home.

9. Gun registration and licensing, safety training for gun owners, background checks on all gun sales, a minimum waiting period, and closing the gun show loophole.
10. Strict policies on accountability for law enforcement officials, especially as it pertains to racial profiling.
11. Mandatory body cameras for all law enforcement officers.
12. Enhancing anti-human trafficking efforts that do not criminalize victims and survivors, provide sex trafficking victims an affirmative defense against solicitation and related charges, and provide a procedure for survivors to vacate prior convictions so that they can pursue a future livelihood with a clean record

**B) We oppose:**

1. Mandatory minimum sentencing for nonviolent offenders.
2. Any and all efforts to enact so-called “tort reform.”

## **V. Environmental Justice & Energy**

**A) We support:**

1. The notion that any individual, now and in the future, has a fundamental right to clean air, clean water, and other natural resources.
2. The notion that the overwhelming scientific consensus proves that climate change is real and caused by humans, and that we must immediately take steps to counteract it.
3. The notion that the negative effects of climate change will disproportionately affect people of lower socioeconomic status, and people of color.
4. Widespread business incentives, research and use of energy efficient solar, wind, biomass, geothermal, hydro, nuclear and other renewable natural sources of power.
5. Incentives for the use of energy conservation and emerging clean energy systems.
6. Measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the United States and strong treaties with other nations to reduce emissions worldwide and the recapturing of harmful gases.
7. The cleanup and restoration of all damaged and degraded government and private project lands and future projects that perpetuate such damage should be opposed.
8. The creation of an independent organization to oversee energy companies and help prevent unethical practices.
9. Comprehensive land use regulations that constrain sprawl, protect our environment, and promote strong, sustainable, and healthy urban areas.

**B) We oppose:**

1. The export of natural resources which damage the environment and long-term economic sustainability of our state and nation
2. The practice of hydraulic fracturing in the nation

## **VI. Foreign Affairs & Veterans**

**A) We support:**

1. A truthful and just resolution of the Armenian Genocide, and support its condemnation.

2. Conditioning our policies and our aid to other governments upon respect for basic human rights.
3. That for veterans who were involuntarily discharged due solely to their sexual orientation, the government should automatically upgrade the less-than-honorable discharges to honorable discharges, without the requirement that service members request it.
4. The elimination of homelessness among veterans by increasing funding levels for permanent affordable housing and therapeutic facilities geared towards the alleviation of PTSD symptoms.
5. That those who begin their service as documented or undocumented immigrants are afforded an immediate pathway to citizenship complimentary of their service to the U.S..
6. That the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) fulfill its obligation to veterans by reducing the backlog of claims through both accelerated claims processing, and employ veterans to perform claims processing.

**B) We oppose:**

1. The use of torture against citizens and noncitizens alike
2. The building of any and all Israeli settlements in Palestinian Territories and denounce them as being illegal
3. The privatization of Veterans Affairs

## **VII. Education**

**A) We support:**

1. Investment in alternative and magnet schools as long as they are accountable to the general public
2. A fair wage to teachers that includes an annual cost of living increase and full insurance coverage for teachers
3. The adoption of programs that seek to assess and accommodate learning disabilities
4. Medically accurate and comprehensive drug and sexual education in all schools
5. Affordability, accessibility, and accountability in higher education
6. The reform of standardized testing, and stand in solidarity with teachers that protest standardized testing they believe is unnecessary and burdensome
7. An increase in funding for public pre-K, public K-12 and public higher education, especially in disadvantaged schools

**B) We oppose:**

1. The public funding of charter schools
2. Predatory student loans that cannot be discharged in bankruptcy
3. Any measure that keeps a school district's leadership from being directly accountable to the people it is supposed to serve such as the dissolution of school boards or decisions made without appropriate community input
4. Abstinence-based sexual education

## **VIII. Community Development**

**We support:**

60. The funding, implementation, construction, maintenance and expansion of adequate roads, bridges, rails, and airports serving remote areas and urban areas
61. Increased funding of public mass transportation
62. Supporting the funding and development of a high-speed rail system.
63. The treatment of broadband as a universal human right.

**IX. Economic Development**

**A) We support:**

1. Small business development. Tax incentives should be designed to support businesses expanding their operations within the state just as incentives are offered to businesses locating in Arkansas from outside the state's borders.
2. A progressive corporate tax system that lowers the tax burden for small Arkansan businesses, maintains a higher rate for large corporations, and removes unfair loopholes.
3. The principles of net neutrality.
4. The 2016 level of estate taxation
5. Mandatory sunset dates for all tax exemptions.
6. Zoning that encourages the development of affordable, safe, and environmentally sound housing.
7. The legalization, regulation, and taxation of marijuana.
8. The legalization, regulation, and taxation of prostitution including spaces which allow the safe practice of said business.

**B) We oppose:**

1. Tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the wealthy

**X. Healthcare**

**A) We support:**

1. The implementation of a medicare-for-all system, to ensure universal and access to healthcare.
2. Extended coverage for all veterans, especially those from service-connected disabilities.
3. The right to physician-assisted suicide for those who are terminally ill and of sound mind.
4. The notion that mental health is equally important as physical health and we support parity in health care coverage and efforts to destigmatize mental illness and the issues surrounding appropriate treatment.
5. The expansion of resources in order to combat the growing opioid epidemic as a health issue.
6. The notion that drug addiction is a health issue, and should be treated as such, instead of as a moral issue.
7. The continuation of the ArkansasWorks as it has helped provide insurance to over two hundred thousand Arkansans.
8. A person's right to reproductive freedom, including abortion procedures as part of comprehensive health coverage provided by governmental and private insurance

- programs regardless of socioeconomic status.
9. Contraceptive methods being included in medical coverage.
  10. Well funded teen pregnancy prevention efforts across the state.
  11. The right for elderly and those with disabilities to receive healthcare at the home

## **XI. Electoral Reform & Ethics**

### **We support:**

1. Public financing for local, state, and federal elections.
2. Automatic voter pre-registration for 16 and 17 year olds.
3. Full cycle voting privileges for those 17-year-olds who will be 18 on Election Day
4. Voting centers on all college and university campuses.
5. Statehood for the District of Columbia.
6. Same-day voter registration.
7. Non-precinct voting, early voting, and Election Day as a national holiday.
8. Clear and transparent elections throughout the government, and at all levels of the Democratic Party.
9. Statehood for Puerto Rico
10. Online voter registration and online change-of-address voter registration
11. The ability to vote by mail

### **We oppose:**

96. The decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*.
97. Any law that would require identification to vote, because such laws only serve as impediments to students, the poor, the elderly and minorities.
98. Abusive attempts to purge voter registration rolls.