



## 2016 Platform Preamble, Articles, & Planks

### PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Democratic Party of Oregon, seek a better future for the present generation and for generations to come. This platform is a guide to the principles and positions by which we intend to fulfill that commitment. We recognize our rights and responsibilities as citizens of our local communities, our state, our nation, and the global community. We hold that every person is guaranteed the rights to life, liberty, equity, and the pursuit of happiness. We express our confidence that every one of us can maintain these rights while sustaining the interdependent web of life on this planet.

As Oregon Democrats, we assert that as citizens of our state and our country, we are the government, and promise to uphold the protections granted to us by our state and national constitutions. We stand firmly opposed to any attempt to compromise those rights and liberties in the name of governmental convenience or security. Where those rights and liberties are not fully realized, we pledge to help everyone within our borders to regain them. We invite all Americans to join with us to affirm our democracy as a beacon of opportunity, tolerance, and freedom admired throughout the world.

## ARTICLE 1 – JOBS, BUSINESS & LABOR

Oregon Democrats work in many trades, occupations, and professions with a belief that all workers and their families deserve a fair share of the American Dream. We recognize that the wealth of our communities and state is created by the effort, knowledge, investments, and skill of workers and business leaders. We honor the efforts of workers, the entrepreneurial spirit of small business that provides the bulk of local job growth, and recognize the stability provided by larger scale community investment.

### Planks:

1. We believe all Oregon workers should have the right to a secure retirement.
2. We support an economy that promotes living-wage local jobs and businesses, by increasing the statewide minimum wage to no less than \$15 an hour, leaving no workers behind and embracing sustainability over short-term profits.
3. We believe corporations can and should function as ethically run and responsibly regulated entities that contribute their fair share to Oregon's economic prosperity.
4. We support equal pay for equal work and oppose wage inequalities for women and minorities.
5. We affirm the right of all workers, public and private, to organize for collective bargaining free of intimidation and coercion, and we oppose any legislation that would limit these rights.
6. We support labor unions and recognize their critical role in fighting for living wages, fair work rules and hiring practices, just cause protection of employment, and safe working conditions.
7. We believe it is important to encourage investment in a robust and well-regulated economy that protects Oregonians from economic instability and provides a level playing field for all businesses.
8. We support Oregon's farmers, ranchers, fishers, and land managers in their efforts to sustainably manage our natural resources and balance competing land use interests.
9. We believe the growing gap between the wealthy and others is detrimental to labor, business, and a dynamic economy.
10. We believe in supporting small businesses by removing unnecessary barriers and

improving access to loans.

11. We believe private financial institutions that are “too big to fail” are detrimental to the functioning of our democracy.
12. We support making it easier and more financially rewarding for business to invest in creating, well-paying, clean-energy jobs.

## **ARTICLE 2 - HEALTH, BASIC NEEDS & HUMAN RIGHTS**

Oregon Democrats affirm the rights of all individuals to be treated with dignity and respect. We believe all people have an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We believe in the freedom and equality of every individual. We believe in a strong social safety net and basic health care as a human right.

### **Planks:**

1. We believe in the right of individuals to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of inherent characteristics, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, residency status, disability, or other identifying qualities.
2. We strongly support women’s rights to reproductive freedom of choice, including unrestricted access to reproductive health care services, regardless of ability to pay.
3. We support end-of-life freedom of choice.
4. We support the right of everyone to the basic necessities of life including: safety, clean air, water, food, shelter, health care, education, and family-wage jobs.
5. We believe in protecting the vulnerable from neglect and abuse, especially children, the medically fragile, people with disabilities, and the elderly.
6. We believe in a comprehensive single-payer system of health care such as improved Medicare for all.
7. We support all military and foreign-service veterans, including reservists and members of the Oregon National Guard.
8. We oppose the death penalty.
9. We believe that all consenting adult couples should have the equal and unequivocal right to civil marriage.
10. We believe Social Security and Medicare benefits provide economic security and

a foundation for a stable and growing economy for all Americans regardless of social status.

11. We support the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment and believe that hunting and responsible gun ownership are traditions worth preserving for future generations.
12. We support completed background checks for all gun sales.
13. We believe measures for reducing firearm-related injuries and deaths can be enacted in terms that pose no threat to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment and no threat to responsible personal firearm ownership and use.
14. We believe in addressing the large disparities in wealth and education between various income and ethnic groups which contribute to widespread harms to human welfare and the social fabric and weaken our democracy.
15. We support actions to address the affordable housing shortages in our local communities and across the state.
16. We believe the internet is an essential resource for all members of our society, and must be treated as a public utility with net neutrality. We believe universally available high-speed internet access is necessary for a free, democratic society in the 21st century.

### **ARTICLE 3 - EDUCATION**

We value universal access to sound, effective, fully funded public education from pre-kindergarten through post-secondary studies and career training. We recognize the quality of our schooling increases our economic well-being, promotes civic responsibility, and enriches our personal lives. Public schools provide a common basis of skills, knowledge, and cultural, social, and work experience that is the foundation for a functioning democracy.

#### **Planks:**

1. We recognize effective educational systems must have sufficient, equitable, stable, and sustainable public funding to ensure a high quality education and full curriculum for all students.
2. We affirm the right of everyone in our diverse populations and special-needs groups to pursue appropriate academic and career education from pre-kindergarten through post-secondary studies.

3. We support restoration of a full range of courses, programs, and services, including civics, art, music, science, physical education, early childhood education, counseling, health, mental health counseling, tutoring, libraries, vocational, and public alternative-educational opportunities and magnet schools.
4. We believe in growing the middle class and reducing income inequality by supporting strong academic and career education policies and programs to ensure workers are prepared for job opportunities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy, including vocational rehabilitation services for people with disabilities.
5. We believe school-based education professionals, students, parents, and community members must be included in the development of quality, broad-based K-12 curricula.
6. We endorse the collaborative evaluation of students, instructors, and administrators, employing broad-based assessment methods that recognize and encourage excellence and ongoing improvement.
7. We insist on the full, effective protection of all student data, including mental health records, to assure information privacy and prevent exploitation.
8. We value the professionalism and dedication of our public educators in instruction, administration, and governance.
9. We insist that charter and virtual schools receiving public funds be governed by the same standards practiced in traditional schools.
10. We support the rights of educational professionals to freely and collectively negotiate working conditions, wages, benefits, and employment stability.
11. We believe that public funding for K-12 and post-secondary education should be provided only to public schools managed by elected boards of education, and not transferred, contracted or sub-contracted to any private corporation for management or instructors.

#### **ARTICLE 4 – REVENUE & TAXATION POLICY**

Oregon Democrats believe revenue policies should reflect the economic needs and condition of the state and be governed by the principles of transparency, fairness, and efficiency. We believe taxation policy should be straightforward and emphasize economic fairness.

Planks:

1. We recognize the broad benefits we receive from local, state, and national governments.
2. We recognize that fair taxation policies and transparent, responsible revenue expenditures are critical in promoting the common good.
3. We believe government should function with fiscal responsibility and not burden future generations with excessive debt.
4. We believe taxation and revenue-expenditure policies should be used to reduce social divisions, including those caused by extreme wealth disparities.
5. We believe public funds generated in Oregon should, as a priority, be reinvested in Oregon.
6. We believe special tax incentives for business development should be coupled with provisions such as job standards, and with reporting to ensure they are fairly administered and provide a benefit to the state.
7. We believe well-purposed government spending can be an economic good because it creates jobs and moves money into the economy.
8. We believe in a fair and progressive tax structure that helps create a large and stable middle class.

**ARTICLE 5 - GOOD GOVERNANCE**

Oregon Democrats are committed to open and responsive government. We recognize that the task of sustaining our democracy and responding to the challenges posed by evolving technology and the world economy requires common effort, compromise, and diligence. We are guided by the wisdom and genius of our founding principles and the Constitution.

Planks:

1. We are committed to transparency, accountability, oversight, integrity, competence, honesty, and citizen participation in government.
2. We believe that a government of the people must not be unduly influenced by special interests, corporate power, or money.
3. We believe that corporations and other purely legal entities are not granted the same rights as “natural persons” by the Constitution.

4. We are committed to protecting and ensuring our constitutional rights and freedoms, including the rights to assemble peacefully and receive equal treatment under the law.
5. We affirm the critical value of religious freedom and the principle of separation of church and state.
6. We hold the right and responsibility of all eligible persons to vote as an essential foundation of our democracy.
7. We support full transparency in recording and counting votes.
8. We believe all political parties should be free to choose their own candidates for public office by popular vote of their members.
9. We believe eminent domain should never be used for the benefit of a private or corporate entity in the absence of a clear public need.
10. We believe publicly funded election campaigns should be a key element of American democracy at all levels.
11. We embrace our shared responsibilities as individuals, businesses, and organizations, and affirm the social contract that binds us to other communities throughout the state.
12. We believe some goods and services are so essential to society that they ought to be managed solely for the public benefit. Among these are: education, incarceration, postal services, fire, police, social security, health care, and other forms of social insurance.

## **ARTICLE 6 – TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY & THE ENVIRONMENT**

As Oregon Democrats we understand that a healthy, sustainable, and beautiful Oregon environment is a key component of our high quality of life and helps support our resource-based economies. We believe prosperity is compatible with protection of the environment. We recognize the benefits provided by sustainably managed forests and rangelands, clean rivers and lakes, healthy air quality, clean and safe drinking water, and a healthy ocean environment. We support the development of environmentally renewable and sustainable energy resources, efficient modes of transportation, preservation of our most pristine lands, and reduction of pollutants.

Planks:

1. We believe the peer-reviewed scientific evidence that climate change is a global emergency caused by human activities, and we must take immediate actions to reduce our negative impacts necessary for the survival of our species.
2. We support peer-reviewed science-based local and national strategies to implement sustainable energy technologies to reduce and prevent the degradation of our life support systems, including our atmosphere, global food supplies, and ocean and fresh water resources as imperative for long-term economic stability.
3. We believe genetically engineered foods require a precautionary approach that includes extreme care in testing, additional scientific regulation, more citizen input, and full disclosure through labeling.
4. We believe greater efforts are needed at the state and national level to identify and reduce the toxic effects of synthetic chemicals and organisms.
5. We believe it is urgent that we invest in efficient, safe, and environmentally preferred transportation systems.
6. We oppose the wholesale conversion of public lands to private ownership, and support the protection of state and federally designated parks, wilderness areas, recreation areas, and other resource lands.
7. We support private property rights and responsible developments that do not compromise the environment or conflict with the well-being of the commons.
8. We believe all citizens have the right to clean air and clean and safe public water resources.
9. We support full funding to update our energy and transportation infrastructures to modern technological standards as a necessary investment in our future economic prosperity.
10. We believe there are multiple benefits to enhancing alternate sources of energy, including solar energy development, reducing fossil fuels from use, and in increasing vegetation and reforestation.
11. We oppose the development of Oregon Coastal regions for the export of fossil fuels.



## ARTICLE 7 - FOREIGN POLICY & NATIONAL SECURITY

Oregon Democrats recognize that our responsibilities extend beyond state and national boundaries and that our national interests require global cooperation.

### Planks:

1. We believe the increasing scarcity of fresh water, ocean fish stocks, and energy creates security and sustainability concerns which will require solutions and resolution on a global scale.
2. We pledge to work nationally and globally to stop nuclear proliferation and to accomplish a meaningful reduction of current nuclear stockpiles.
3. We pledge to actively support treaties on chemical and biological warfare and weapons and the international ban on land mines.
4. We affirm our commitment to honor ratified treaties and to support the United Nations.
5. We affirm our commitment to high global standards for labor and environmental protection in trade agreements.
6. We support the use and primacy of diplomacy and negotiation to resolve regional and international conflicts and promote peace.
7. We support the ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
8. We assert that no one should be subjected to arbitrary interference with their privacy, family, home, or correspondence, and we oppose the broad violations of these principles by any government agency.
9. We believe it should be clear U.S. policy to actively oppose terrorism, genocide, torture, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and religious and political persecution worldwide.
10. We believe in abiding by the Geneva Conventions regarding torture, rendition, indefinite detention, detention without charges, and extra-judicial executions.
11. We assert that major displacements of people from their communities constitute an international humanitarian, political and security disaster that demands immediate attention.

## ARTICLE 8 - JUSTICE

We support fair, humane, and equitable treatment for all, regardless of ethnic background, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs, or economic means. We believe that all law enforcement, prosecutors, and court personnel must honor their oath to the principles of our Constitution and its precious Bill of Rights for all. As all people have constitutional rights to a ‘presumption of innocence,’ we must all have access to affordable, quality legal representation. Fairness and integrity must always guide our actions in investigation. Just procedure and principles must be followed in our collaborative, unbiased, thorough search together for the “whole truth” and justice for all.

### *Planks:*

1. We believe short-term public safety considerations should not override civil liberty protections and justice.
2. We defend every individual’s right to freedom from mass surveillance, search, or seizure unless authorized by a specific “probable cause” warrant.
3. We support community policing.
4. We believe mandatory minimum prison sentences should be eliminated. Justice is served when judges have discretion to apply sentences based on the unique circumstances of each offender, crime and victim.
5. We believe no one should profit from criminal incarceration, which creates perverse incentives to underserved inmate populations that result in increased recidivism rates. Jails and prisons should not be privatized. Exploitative rules for inmate phone calls, video visits, and money transfers should be outlawed.
6. We believe rehabilitation of offenders works best when offenders are re-integrated into the community with support, supervision, and services. Probation and post-prison supervision departments should be fully funded and able to provide transitional housing, mental health and addiction services as needed.
7. We believe effective legal representation for indigent people accused of crimes is an integral part of criminal justice.
8. We believe inmates should have educational opportunities and develop employable skills.

9. We believe police departments should train and equip officers to deal with people in crisis with respect. Deadly force should always be a last resort. Police officers should be held accountable to professional standards that emphasize non-violent methods to resolve conflict and ensure offender compliance and safety.
10. We believe juries should no longer be allowed to render non-unanimous verdicts in felony cases.
11. We believe grand jury testimony should be recorded.

## **ARTICLE 9 - IMMIGRATION**

We, as a nation founded largely on immigration, value its benefit to our society. We need to stand firm against xenophobic, prejudiced, and racist rhetoric. The invaluable contributions of immigrants to our communities should be recognized and immigrants and their rights respected.

### **Planks:**

1. We value our nation's diversity and recognize the economic, social, and cultural contributions immigrants make to society.
2. We believe workers, their families, and other undocumented immigrants should have a path to legal residence, and eventually citizenship.
3. We believe the exploitation of undocumented workers must stop, because it is wrong and it drives down wages and degrades working conditions for all workers.
4. We believe deportation policies should be humane and flexible and allow for fair due process.
5. Immigrants with family legally present in the United States, immigrants brought to the U.S. as children, and immigrants with longstanding ties to U.S. communities should not be deported without due process and consideration of these circumstances.
6. Immigrant services should be not be privatized or operated for profit.
7. Constitutional provisions granting citizenship for people born in the U.S. to immigrant parents should not be repealed.

8. People wishing to immigrate to our country from disastrous and violent areas of the world should be considered for refugee status.
9. We oppose laws which can be used for profiling, including those that mandate people carry their legal papers.
10. Refugees of war should be welcomed by a nation as deeply rooted in immigration as ours.