

# **BLACK HAWK COUNTY DEMOCRATS**

## **2016 Platform**

### **Our Liberties We Prize and Our Rights We Will Maintain**

#### **(Iowa State Motto)**

#### **PREAMBLE**

We envision a truly free, democratic and just society where we: 1) come together and solve our problems by consensus; 2) take personal and collective responsibility for civic involvement, and participation in decision-making; 3) learn to live in harmony and embrace the principles of toleration and respect for diversity and the differing views of others; 4) secure the labor, civil, economic, and human rights of all from violation; 5) ensure that political, economic, and judicial institutions serve all, regardless of socioeconomic status; 6) provide full and affordable education to everyone, not merely to get meaningful jobs, but to grow and flourish as human beings; 7) value human needs and a standard of living necessary for effective democracy and a healthy society; and 8) work together to protect, preserve, and restore the global environment to ensure that present and future generations will have safe and clean air, water and, food supplies, and will be able to benefit from the beauty and bounty of nature that past generations have enjoyed.

We believe the Democratic Party should promote progressive government that serves all the people consistently and fairly, irrespective of age, race, gender, disability, religion, national origin, native language, sexual orientation, income level, marital status, non-religion or lack of religion or geographic residence. We safeguard our country, our democracy, our rights and our basic human dignity. We support strengthening our families by increasing opportunities for all. We strive for viable, safe, secure and livable communities without sacrificing our liberties. In addition, we expect accountability in government at every level.

We are concerned with issues of local, state, national and international impact. We desire policies that address a range of issues including the environment, our economy, education, health and human services, government and international affairs. We are committed to platform planks that represent the concerns expressed by fellow citizens who attended Black Hawk County Democratic Caucuses. We believe that this platform reflects the heritage of our Party; and it demonstrates our commitment to combining the accomplishments of our past with the ideas of the present to realize our dreams for the future. We further believe these planks serve as a guide for our elected and appointed officials.

## I. AGRICULTURE, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

### Agriculture

#### *We Support:*

- A. Preservation of family farms, organic farming, crop diversification, and agriculture-based jobs.
- B. Clear labeling of food origin, irradiation, genetically engineered foods(GMO), antibiotics and hormones.
- C. Cultivating hemp for secondary industry, goods and nutritional foods.
- D. Protecting bees by banning neonicotinoid pesticides.
- E. Moratorium on Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) construction and/or expansion.
- F. Local control of CAFO sitings; taxing CAFO buildings at commercial rates; elimination of the property tax exemption for CAFO manure pits.
- G. Humane treatment of animals in CAFOs; eliminating antibiotic and growth hormone use.
- H. Aid to secure land ownership for beginning and small farmers.

### Energy

#### *We Support:*

- I. Developing an energy grid for Iowa wind power.
- J. Increasing subsidies for renewable energy (RE), wind, solar, and geothermal; including the windmill tax credit.
- K. Development of alternative bio-fuels, not from corn or soybeans.
- L. Renewable energy standards (RES) requiring all utilities in Iowa to produce or purchase 40% of electricity from renewable sources by 2020; and 50% by 2030
- M. Net-metering and feed-in tariff for all utilities, including REC and Municipal.
- N. Increasing Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for all vehicles.
- O. Vehicle registration fees rewarding fuel efficiency.

## **Environment**

### ***We Support:***

- P. Tax on carbon emissions and reducing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in our atmosphere to below 350 parts per million (ppm).
- Q. Proposed Iowa Environmental Quality Act.
- R. Increased funding for Nutrient-Reduction Strategies, mandating participation, and establishing numerical standards.
- S. Assessing industrial & agricultural polluters for costs of environmental cleanup.
- T. Mandatory LEED standards for public and private buildings; incentives to developers, contractors, and individuals to build “green” carbon-neutral buildings.
- U. Geothermal Energy in new construction.
- V. EPA setting limits on the amount of hydrogen sulfide and ammonia emitted.
- W. Designating the Iowa Loess Hills as National Reserve.
- X. Smart Growth policies for urban development.
- Y. Regulations to reduce the amount of phosphorus, mercury, and nitrates in Iowa’s soil and water.
- Z. Funding the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation trust fund.
- AA. Repealing the 1872 Mining Law allowing mining on Federal land for free.
- BB. Full funding for the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP).
- CC. Monitoring Iowa’s major watersheds for nutrients, posting the water quality online.
- DD. Reduction, reuse, and recycling of plastics, electronics, and batteries.
- EE. Increasing the bottle deposit to ten cents, including all beverage cans and bottles, and increasing the redemption fee for recycling centers.
- FF. Banning lead shot.
- GG. Adding “Protection of the Environment” to the Iowa Constitution

### ***We Oppose:***

- HH. Vertical integration of livestock production and marketing.
- II. The “Ag-Gag” bill
- JJ. Use of 2,4-D resistant corn and soy seeds
- KK. Growing pharmaceutical GMOs in open fields
- LL. Deep water and arctic oil drilling
- MM. Construction of pipelines that transport tar sand oil
- NN. Frac sand mining in Iowa, and all fracking for oil and gas extraction
- OO. Depositing coal ash and industrial waste in unlined and unmonitored fill sites
- PP. Construction of the Bakken pipeline.
- QQ. Subsidies for fossil fuels and nuclear energy.
- RR. Breeding of any pet animals with an emphasis on substandard conditions of care or profits over animal welfare.

## **II. ECONOMY, COMMERCE & LABOR**

### ***We Support:***

- A. Tax policies and/or subsidies for small businesses that maintain the social contract with their employees including: livable wages, reasonable benefits and pensions and safe work places.
- B. Positive “fair trade” policy and enforcement which protects workers’ rights and the environment worldwide.
- C. Pension portability and efforts to protect and preserve workers’ pensions and health care benefits.
- D. Fully funding Iowa Public Employment Retirement System (IPERS), the Favorable Experience Dividend (FED), and the Municipal Fire and Police Retirement System of Iowa to maintain their long-term financial health.
- E. A “living wage” standard for all employees.
- F. Allowing Iowa workers who are injured on the job to choose their own licensed medical care provider.

- G. The objectives and rigorous enforcement of comprehensive Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) standards.
- H. The federal Employee Free Choice Act.
- I. State Prevailing Wage Law; expanding the Davis Bacon Act.
- J. Expanding the scope of public sector bargaining.
- K. Legislation to allow private and public sector workers in Iowa to negotiate “fair share” clauses.
- L. Repealing state Right to Work laws.
- M. A statewide health insurance program for public employees.
- N. Continuation of unemployment benefits beyond 26 weeks.
- O. Providing unemployment benefits for Education Support Personnel (ESP).
- P. Expansion and enforcement of laws to prohibit predatory lending.
- Q. Manufacturing of U.S. military supplies in the United States.
- R. Rebuilding America’s infrastructure with a Works Progress Administration (WPA) type program.
- S. Expanding public transportation and prioritizing federally funded high-speed rail.
- T. Keeping manufacturing and jobs in the U.S.
- U. Reenactment of Glass-Steagall Act.
- V. Enforcing Dodd-Frank Act.
- W. Providing assistance and incentives for stateside U.S. businesses to invest in factory start up, job training and job placement.
- X. Cost-conscious wealth creation and economic growth in blighted communities.
- Y. Strengthening inner-city neighborhoods by encouraging investment through tax breaks.
- Z. Passing the Restore the American Dream for the 99% Act.
- AA. Equal pay for equal work including women and minorities.
- BB. Increased funding for public radio and television.

- CC. Improved local and state transportation system (bus and rail).
- DD. Expanding existing highways instead of building new.
- EE. Construction and maintenance of any nuclear power plants in Iowa be performed by union workers.
- FF. Penalizing companies that move operations outside the United States.
- GG. Hiring of Wage Theft Investigators by IWD with full funding, and increasing fines and penalties for violations.
- HH. Paid maternity and family leave.
- II. Raising the minimum wage with COLA.
- JJ. Providing a COLA for state workers' pensions.

***We Oppose:***

- KK. Tax cuts undermining the ability of governments to provide essential services or which increase deficits or reduce progressiveness of the income tax system.
- LL. U.S. companies establishing factories in foreign countries to access cheap labor, to avoid U.S. income taxes, environmental protection or fair labor standards.
- MM. Tax cuts for the wealthy contributing to massive deficits.
- NN. "Trickle-down" economics.
- OO. Privatizing public sector services.
- PP. Eroding overtime pay protections.
- QQ. Eroding injured workers' rights in the name of "economic development", "regulatory reform" or "tort reform."
- SS. National "right to work" laws.
- TT. Increasing taxes on credit unions.
- UU. Immunity for telecommunications companies and other parties violating privacy laws.
- VV. Corporate consolidation of news organizations.
- WW. Trade Promotional Authority, known as "fast track".
- XX. Trans Pacific Partnership and secretive, undemocratic trade agreements.

### III. EDUCATION

*We Support:*

- A. Fully funding Head Start for all defined and qualified at-risk children.
- B. Increased funding for:
  - 1. Public schools, area education agencies, community colleges and public universities.
  - 2. Public pre-schools and early childhood programs.
  - 3. Special education and school services for students with disabilities.
  - 4. Federal TRIO and Upward Bound educational programs.
  - 5. The arts in K-12 education.
  - 6. Public libraries.
- C. Increased state funding for the University of Northern Iowa.
- D. Repeal of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- E. Fully funding adult education in prisons.
- F. Reducing tuition and other educational costs for students attending public post-secondary education.
- G. Expanding the Pell Grant Program and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program.
- H. Expansion of and increased funding for secondary educational programs that provide internship opportunities.
- I. Raising Iowa teachers' salaries to be nationally competitive.
- J. Multicultural education for all students in state supported schools from grades 6 through 12 as well as mandatory inmate instruction at least for 6-12 months prior to release
- K. A requirement for licensed school guidance counselors, media specialists, and registered nurses in all public schools.
- L. Applying the best competent research available in organizing and delivering student instruction.
- M. Reducing class size for lower elementary grades.

- N. Early recognition of and intervention with youth at-risk of violent and aggressive behavior.
- O. Multiple interventions, services, and assessments to support and report student learning in Pre-K-12 education, including decisions regarding retention and graduation.
- P. High standards for home school instructors, curriculum, assessment, and attendance, as well as on-line and for-profit instruction.
- Q. Title IX and its enforcement.
- R. Full repeal of the Solomon amendment.
- S. Including the study of non-English languages in pre-school, elementary, and secondary curricula.
- T. Age appropriate financial planning and career education for all students.
- U. Teaching of the sciences in the public school curriculum based on a foundation of scientific knowledge.
- V. High schools in Iowa creating philosophy programs and classes.

***We Oppose:***

- W. State and federal funding of abstinence-only sex education.
- X. Diverting public monies away from public schools to fund vouchers, tuition tax credits, private or for-profit educational businesses.
- Y. Standardized tests as the sole and/or mandatory criteria for grade retention in public school.

#### **IV. GOVERNMENT & LAW**

***We Support:***

- A. Improving homeland security without eroding civil liberties.
- B. Repealing “USA PATRIOT Act”
- C. Increasing Legal Aid and Public Defenders Office funding.
- D. Diversion of mentally ill and addicted offenders into appropriate treatment programs.
- E. Funding reentry programs for offenders and employer tax credits and employment bonding programs.
- F. Voting rights for all persons.

- G. Reinstating government benefits for offenders re-entering society.
- H. “Banning the Box” on job/housing applications.
- I. Continuing life in prison without parole for murder in Iowa.
- J. Banning capital punishment.
- K. Funding for expansion of drug, mental health and family courts.
- L. Eliminating racial disparity in the criminal justice system.
- M. Repealing mandatory sentences, including mandatory minimums.
- N. Equalizing sentencing for crack cocaine and powder cocaine.
- O. Fully funding IA Department of Corrections.
- P. Iowa’s system of selecting judges on merit.
- Q. Improving standards of pre-trial detention, affirming only flight to avoid prosecution and/or danger to the community.
- R. Basing criminal corrections system on victim restitution, offender rehabilitation, and restoration and reconciliation of the offender and community.
- S. Prohibiting unrelated riders to Congressional Bills.
- T. Enforcing strict rules governing the practices of lobbyists.
- U. Establishing a comprehensive immigration policy that:
  - a. provides an expeditious system of legal entry
  - b. prioritizes reunification of immediate families and response to persecution or humanitarian crisis
  - c. provides requirements to earn legal status for those out of status
  - d. provides an up-to-date electronic identification system for employers verifying employee citizenship or immigration status with penalties for employers who violate the law.
- V. Passage of the DREAM Act.
- W. Full appropriation for government mandated programs.
- X. Reforming Tax Increment Financing (TIF) laws.
- Y. Open and competitive bidding and full disclosure in government contracting.

- Z. Limiting Eminent Domain to public projects demonstrated to be for the public use and good with adequate due process.
- AA. Reforming USPS pension funding and retaining processing centers.
- BB. A progressive Tax Code.
- CC. Taxing all stock market transactions.
- DD. Preventing discrimination in health care, housing, and home ownership.
- EE. Increasing funding for Iowa's emergency assistance programs (EAPs).
- FF. Full funding the Job Access Reverse Commute Program.
- GG. Gender equity for military service credit.
- HH. Using the discretionary portion of the Pentagon budget for the benefit of Veterans.
- II. Reducing the federal military budget and expenditures.
- JJ. Preservation of Roe v. Wade.
- KK. Reintroduction of the ERA, continuation of Affirmative Action, and enforcement of the ADA.
- LL. Defending equal rights of all persons without regard to sexual orientation or gender identification, including civil marriage.
- MM. Congressional voting representation for DC.
- NN. Impartial Congressional redistricting.
- OO. A U.S. Constitutional Amendment defining a "person" to mean a "human being," not a corporation, reversing Citizens United, and clarifying money is not speech.
- PP. Publicly funded election campaigns, and campaign finance reform, limiting campaign expenditures.
- QQ. Providing for timely public disclosure of all contributions to any candidate or issue campaign or PAC from any source.
- RR. Same day registration and a verifiable paper trail for each vote cast.
- SS. Background checks for all weapons sales, closing the Gun Show loophole, and banning assault weapons and expanded magazines.
- TT. Expanding online voter registration.
- UU. Postal Banking by the USPS.

- VV. That Civil rights apply to all, including all faiths and Black Lives Matter.
- WW. Elimination of corruption, excessive force, brutality and racial profiling by law enforcement through sufficient training and public accountability.
- XX. Eliminating the cap for Social Security contributions.
- YY. Increase funding for State Parks.
- ZZ. Attacks on Abortions clinics being considered Terrorist attacks.
- AAA. Driver licenses for undocumented immigrants.
- BBB. Replacing the Voters' Rights Act of 1965 with a formal amendment to the United States Constitution.

***We oppose:***

- CCC. All acts of voter suppression.
- DDD. Predatory lending and excessive interest on pay day loans.
- EEE. Using unelected super delegates in the process of choosing our nominee.
- FFF. For-profit jails.

## **V. HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

***We Support:***

- A. Social Security and Medicare as national programs.
- B. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, and expanding it to Medicare-for all.
- C. Elimination of the coverage gap in Medicare D known as the Doughnut Hole.
- D. Research and partnerships for medical advances, and incentives for providers to invest in programs to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of care for those with chronic diseases and terminal illnesses.
- E. Empowering individuals through education and preventive care to actively manage and improve their health.
- F. Equipping employers with information, incentives and assistance to improve workforce wellness.
- G. Increased funding for:

1. Home health care services
  2. Stem-cell research
  3. Childcare services
- H. Medical records in electronic format and available to patients.
- I. Health care coverage for all children.
- J. Engaging families, schools and communities to reverse childhood obesity.
- K. Funding scholarships, grants, forgivable loans and other programs addressing shortages of medical professionals and personnel in Iowa.
- L. Making Iowa nurses and healthcare workers' salaries nationally competitive.
- M. Requiring any prescription ordered by a physician be covered by insurance and filled by the pharmacist.
- N. Negotiating lower drug prices for all.
- O. Fully funding and removing any cap on Iowa's Mental Health and Disability Redesign, which includes substance abuse.
- P. Increased funding and oversight in the Department of Human Services to protect children and families from physical, mental and emotional abuse, and victims of human trafficking.
- Q. Expanding the mental health workforce.
- R. A statewide real-time registry regarding availability of psychiatric beds.
- S. Funding for immediate mental / physical assessments and ongoing mental and physical health care for all inmates and persons in jail diversion programs.
- T. Increasing access to birth control, a woman's right to control healthcare decisions and appropriations and facilities to make this possible.
- U. Regulating nicotine products by the Food and Drug Administration as a drug.
- V. Decriminalizing and continuing regulations of the substances defined in the Controlled Substances Act and providing treatment to those addicted to these substances.
- W. Whole-plant medical cannabis for treatment of all applicable medical conditions.

- X. Strengthening laws protecting victims and dependents from domestic violence; full funding for programs to prevent sexual violence, domestic violence and to assist victims; and measures to ensure that the federal fines and penalties collected under the Victims of Crime Act reach victims.
- Y. Providing food, shelter, health care and educational opportunities for people impacted by the recession and national disasters with resources allocated promptly and fairly and with appropriate requirements.
- Z. Paid sick leave for all workers.
- AA. Cost of living increases to Social Security, Medicare and disability benefits.
- BB. Immunizations for entry to any public or private schools that receive federal funds.
- CC. Research- based sexual education in schools.
- DD. “Death with Dignity Act”.
- EE. Self-defense training and the ability to carry nonlethal self-defense items (i.e. mace) for state workers that spend time in the field.

***We Oppose:***

- FF. Privatizing or cutting Social Security benefits of current and future recipients including Chaining CPI.
- GG. Voucher program for funding Medicare.
- HH. Block grants for funding Medicaid.
- II. Tobacco and alcohol advertising targeting children.
- JJ. Unequal health insurance premiums based on gender.
- KK. Diversion of surplus FICA funds into the General Fund.

## **VI. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

***We Support:***

- A. All international efforts to end genocide, gender violence, and human rights violations.
- B. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Geneva Conventions.

- C. Escrowing aid to Israel until it stops further building of settlements and recognizes a contiguous, viable Palestinian state, with UN membership, along the 1967 borders.
- D. U.S. leadership in international efforts to address global warming including implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement and to promote sustainable economic development.
- E. U.S. leadership to reduce nuclear stockpiles.
- F. Complete and timely U.S. participation in the United Nations system and full payment of assessments and voluntary contributions on a timely basis.
- G. U.N. Sustainable Development Goals – expanding the Millennium Development Goals by addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people.
- H. Full implementation of the U.S. Action Plan on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.
- I. Ratification of and full participation in the:
  - a. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
  - b. Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - c. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
  - d. Rome Statute creating the International Criminal Court
  - e. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
  - f. Biological Weapons Convention Protocol
  - g. Ottawa Treaty to Ban Landmines
  - h. Convention on the Destruction of Chemical Weapons
  - i. Cluster Munitions Treaty
  - j. International Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
  - k. Convention on the Law of the Sea
  - l. Arms Trade Treaty
  - m. Optional Protocol to the Convention on Torture
  - n. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

- J. Immediate closure of all U.S. prisons in foreign nations including the one at the U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- K. Normalization of relations with Cuba.
- L. Conclusion of U.S. military participation in Afghanistan
- M. Providing appropriate assistance for returning troops.
- N. Closing U.S. military bases in as many countries as possible (as determined by a nonpartisan citizen review), and bringing the troops home.
- O. Taxes and tariffs on imports from any country equal to what it imposes on U.S. products.
- P. Payments to UNESCO

***We Oppose:***

- Q. U.S. military action against any sovereign nation without a treaty obligation or a constitutional declaration of war.
- R. Torture by any entity or contractor representing the U.S.
- S. Continued operation of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (formerly School of the Americas).
- T. Additional sanctions against Iran.