

Social Justice

[Encompasses previous planks of Human Rights, Immigration, Housing Justice, and Culture and the Arts...]

The inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all human beings are foundations of freedom, justice, and peace. Our democracy rests on the rights and responsibilities set forth in the United States Constitution, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and the Washington State Constitution. We are a nation of diverse cultures. Immigrants strengthen the United States of America. All immigrants should be afforded full human rights and a fair, safe, and timely path to legal status or citizenship. We believe that safe, quality, affordable housing is a basic human right, and the foundation for success in life, education, and employment. Easy access and frequent exposure to the arts, and to the elements that comprise all the world's diverse cultures, are essential for the enrichment, health, and well-being of our greater society.

We believe:

- Our government derives its legitimacy solely from the consent of the People;
- As Democrats, we are, and will remain, at the forefront of the struggle to extend and ensure social, political, economic, and legal rights to all persons;
- It is our responsibility to protect the rights and welfare of all people within our borders.
- In a transparent, impartial application and enforcement of law;
- Black lives matter;
- We must identify, challenge, and eradicate the underlying conditions that give rise to the glaring inequalities around us;
- Free and open voting is foundational to democracy;
- In the consistent application of constitutional checks and balances and oversight among the branches of our government;
- Privacy is fundamental; our private lives and personal information must be protected from intrusion by government or others;
- Human rights apply to all humans regardless of immigration status and include access to safe food, air, water, and shelter, as well as freedom of speech, personal safety, health care, education, employment, legal aid, and due process;
- Discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, military service, insurance, licensing or education based on age, race, ethnic origin, national origin, language, religion, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, marital status, parenthood, disability, physical size, economic status, or political affiliation is wrong;
- Each person has the right to sovereignty over their own body;
- The right to marry, as a legal union of consenting adults, without regard to sexual orientation or gender-identity, should be preserved;
- The right of working people to unionize is a fundamental civil right;
- The right of an individual to practice their religion does not extend to the denial of the constitutional rights of others;
- In the separation of church and state, and that no entity has the right to impose its religious doctrine on others;

- Those who benefit from unearned privilege must actively listen to marginalized communities and step back to provide space for members of such communities to be heard by society at large.
- All people, regardless of their country of origin or their immigration status, deserve to be treated fairly, respectfully, and with dignity, and that all people have a right to equal treatment under the law;
- All children regardless of immigration status are entitled to education to provide them the knowledge and skills to be productive members of society;
- In access to health care and human services without regard to immigration status; withholding those services is discriminatory and inhumane;
- Immigration is not a matter of homeland security;
- All detainees should have the right of habeas corpus, to humane treatment, safe facilities, adequate medical care, nutrition, clothing, shelter, freedom of religious practices, family unity, legal defense, minimum wage for their work, and access to basic education services, interpretive services, and an accounting of their location.

We Call For:

National Level	State Level

- All levels of government to use creative solutions and progressive revenue sources to ensure all people have permanent, stable, secure, safe and livable housing;
- Protections, and their enforcement, against discrimination in housing on the basis of race, country of origin, religious or non-religious status, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, source of income, age, political beliefs, parental, or relationship status;
- A major increase in funding for assistance and construction of affordable and low-income housing in Washington State;
- Improving and implementing property tax breaks on primary residences of low-income homeowners, small and micro businesses;
- Repeal of Washington State’s prohibition on rent control;
- Reducing the maximum allowable interest and penalties assessed for delinquent real estate taxes on a homeowner’s primary residence;
- Change to zoning laws to incorporate mother-in-law, over-garage apartments, tiny houses, and other low-cost housing in low-density residential neighborhoods;
- Safe, sanitary, places for homeless people to live in cars, tents, tiny houses, and trailers.
- Development of public properties under public administration to create long term, low-income, housing;
- Creative options to assist homeowners at risk of foreclosure;
- Transitional housing for homeless residents who need services to prepare for a stable lifestyle in-line with housing-first principles.
- Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment;
- Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women;

- The right to be free of government, corporate, or religious interference in their reproductive decisions, including contraception and abortion, and to have safe, legal, protected, affordable and accessible health care that enables them to make informed choices;
- Honoring the rich diversity of society and efforts to reflect that diversity in our Party, including special consideration to be paid to the rights of currently and historically marginalized communities, including individuals with disabilities, immigrants, peoples of color, indigenous people, the very poor, and religious minorities and atheists; those who face discrimination to be afforded the legal means and economic opportunities to overcome such injustice;
- Policies that will strengthen our country by affirming the value of all individuals, and by eliminating the systemic conditions that perpetuate inequality, oppression, and lack of equal access to opportunities;
- Respecting the rights of all adults, including seniors and persons with disabilities, to direct their own lives in housing, education, medical, financial, and all other life choices to the extent of their abilities;
- Enforcing and monitoring the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Students with Disabilities Act, and the Rehabilitation Act;
- Equal pay for equal work;
- The end of human trafficking for the sex trade and all other forms of involuntary servitude;
- Legislation that leads to ending child or slave labor worldwide;
- Strong legislation, treatment programs and education designed to reduce harassment, intimidation, domestic or sexual violence, gun violence, and bullying;
- A commitment to Free Speech which carries an obligation to speak out in defense of values of democracy and inclusivity against the evil forces of racism and other hate speech;
- Acknowledging the human rights of all American Indian and Alaska Native women by supporting the goal of identifying and compiling a list of American Indian and Alaska Native women who are missing and/or murdered.
- Urgent comprehensive reform of United States immigration policy;
- Recognizing the basic human rights of immigrants and protecting them with transparent due process in all proceedings and a clear and equitable pathway to documented status and citizenship if desired;
- Increasing family unification, including families of domestic partners and bi-national couples, by granting legal status with the same standards as spouses of citizens;
- Allowing undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children who have attained the age of majority to apply for U.S. citizenship without first being required to return to their country of origin;
- A more comprehensive “Dream Act” for young adults to enter a path of achievement that can lead to United States citizenship;
- Extending temporary residency to children of undocumented immigrants to allow them to pursue higher education or national service and to be given an opportunity to earn permanent residency;
- Enforcement of the laws which penalize employers who knowingly employ undocumented immigrants;
- Provide legal access for employers to an immigrant workforce, such as a guest worker program;
- Policies that fully integrate and support immigrants as equal members of our communities, including programs offering instruction in English, interpretative and translation services of governmental documents and services, and preparation for citizenship;
- Policies that encourage foreign students to remain in the United States and give them opportunity to earn permanent residency;
- Increase the number of qualified immigration judges to clear the immigration backlog and avoid lengthy detentions for adults and children;
- An end to deportation or detention of family members of natural-born U.S. citizens;
- An end to deportation or detention without due process of law;

- Streamlining and expediting procedures for granting asylum to persons fleeing from areas of war, genocide, and political oppression, drug and human trafficking, subject to appropriate security concerns;
- Provisions to prevent discrimination in wages and working conditions for immigrant workers, including access to safe and adequate housing, medical care and educational opportunities;
- Using diplomacy and sustainable development to improve the social, economic and environmental conditions that contribute to undocumented immigration into the United States;
- Qualified foster care services for undocumented, unaccompanied minors.
- A substantial commitment to public funding for the arts and arts education;
- Libraries, performing arts centers and museums to be well-funded, accessible, and diverse in their offerings;
- Easy access and frequent exposure to public art events, performances, and exhibits for all communities in Washington;
- Respect and appreciation of cultural diversity;
- Arts and cultural education to be available and accessible to all, and to be a core subject in our K-12 public schools; added as a component of STEM, as an “A,” to make “STEAM;”
- Public support of small businesses which promote the arts;
- Our community of diverse cultures to be encouraged, welcomed, and supported, including art galleries/studios, performance venues, cafes, restaurants, bookstores, music stores, and private art and culturally focused schools;
- Public venues for art and cultural festivals, events, performances, and exhibits to be made readily available;
- Increased funding of Washington County, State, and National Parks with a commitment to maintaining and improving natural space access for all Washington residents;
- Maintaining low-cost entrance fees to State and National Parks so that all may enjoy access to public lands;
- Communications about arts and cultural events, performances, and exhibits to all our communities to be frequent, accessible, and diversified;
- Communications about available funding and opportunities for artists to be frequent, accessible, and diversified;
- Existing public art displays and venues to be well maintained and preserved;
- Cultural and arts exchanges that represent the State of Washington across the United States and abroad;
- Developing community partnerships to promote and create art and cultural experiences.

We Oppose:

- Removal of surplus Public Property into private ownership as an incentive to provide affordable housing;
- Predatory lending, discounting foreclosures, and practices which take advantage of victims of natural disasters;
- Policies and practices that dehumanize and criminalize neighbors experiencing homelessness, including sweeps, hostile urban architecture, and anti-nuisance ordinances;
- The unconstitutional surveillance of U.S. citizens by the NSA and other U.S. intelligence agencies;
- Organized prayer in taxpayer-funded institutions and the use of government funds for religious purposes;
- Discrimination against LGBTQ+ people on parenting rights;
- All modes and methods of denying in practice a person’s right to reproductive choice over their own body, including:

- o Defunding Planned Parenthood;
- o Requiring complete hospital surgical facilities for abortion;
- o The legal doctrine of “fetal personhood;”
- o Hyde Amendment restrictions on federal funding;
- o Construing religious freedom of a church-owned hospital to deny access to an abortion; or personal choice to have sterilization;
- Refusing access to gender-affirming health care, services and surgery;
- “Conversion therapy,” which seeks to change sexual orientation;
- Barring access to public restrooms which correspond with an individual's gender identity.
- Separating families of undocumented immigrants and people seeking asylum;
- The use of the term “illegal” to refer to any human being;
- State or local agencies involvement in the enforcement of federal immigration laws, including providing information, access, and/or assistance to ICE;
- Border Patrol checkpoints away from the border and the engagement of Border Patrol agents in ordinary law enforcement activities, including providing routine translation services for other agencies;
- The use of for-profit prisons or detention centers by Immigration, Customs and Enforcements (ICE) used for the detention of immigrants;
- Forced labor of detainees;
- Demands for immediate presentation of documents regarding one’s status in the United States;
- Efforts to deputize, commission, finance, or otherwise encourage vigilante border militia groups in the United States;
- Automatic detention and/or deportation of asylum-seekers;
- Legislative attempts to establish English as the sole official language of the United States;
- Unjust and arbitrary quotas, limits, and other immigration rules that have the primary purpose of preventing new immigration;
- The use of work visas, such as H(1)(b) and H(2)(a) visas, as a substitute for hiring U.S. residents;
- Policies that exclude or demean immigrants based on religion or country of origin;
- Local jurisdiction contracts with ICE for services which help arrest, detain, or deport immigrants;
- Judging the merits of asylum seekers based on U.S. geopolitical and/or economic interests.