

DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF LANE COUNTY

2012 Party Platform

The Democratic Party of Lane County is committed to building a Just, Responsible & Secure society:

I. Where the economic & physical security of all people in our community is ensured; *ECONOMIC & NATIONAL SECURITY*

1. Create an economic system that develops economic opportunities & jobs that benefit individuals, families, & communities:

- Simplify the process to create & grow small businesses by streamlining bureaucracy. Support small businesses & companies by creating “small business incubators” to help navigate them through the process.
- Build a regional investment pool that would include banks, local governments & private investors—providing much needed capital to create & retain jobs locally.
- Foster entrepreneurship & attract businesses to the area.

2. Create a fair tax system that generates sufficient revenue for federal, state & local government & helps reverse the growing economic inequalities:

- Promote a progressive tax structure that ensures all Americans pay their proportional share of taxes, with a

specific & immediate focus on restoring tax rates for upper income tax brackets to levels that more accurately reflect the benefit these individuals receive from society.

- Rationalize corporate taxation practices that result in gross under-taxation, including reducing the number of tax breaks & eliminating loopholes & internalizing external costs on society through industry/product-specific taxation.
- Support the Wall St. Speculators tax being promoted by Rep. DeFazio.
- Promote the most fiscally responsible revenue generation policies at the state level, including revisiting Measures 5, 11, 48, & 50, changing the 3/5th majority requirement for the legislature to raise revenue to a simple majority, & eliminating the ‘Kicker Refund.’

3. Promote living wage employment & organizing rights:

- Promote legislation that ensures the peoples' right to organize a union, protects the minimum wage, & supports local hiring in compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act.
- Build economic sustainability through local economic development, with an emphasis on local hiring, & maximizing existing human resources, training potential, & local agriculture programs.
- Promote policies & tax practices that encourage companies to create & retain living wage jobs in the U.S. as opposed to offshore.

4. Protect the promise of pensions & the solvency of Social Security:

- Oppose the privatization of Social Security, remove Social Security from General Fund, & remove the cap on income subject to Social Security contributions.
- Allow Oregon PERS to invest in Oregon Bonds supporting infrastructure.
- Protect Private & Public sector pension plans.

5. Increase the capacity & meet the expansion needs of businesses, & provide the people with a framework for the improvement of society by investing in America's infrastructure:

- Build a coherent & effective network for public & private transportation to promote urban density & prevent urban

sprawl, while moving beyond a fossil-fuel paradigm.

- Encourage partnership between public entities & private enterprises to identify & pursue needed development.
- Reevaluate agricultural production & distribution, developing sustainable local capacity & improving or establishing necessary infrastructure.

6. Provide safety & reduce community, school, & domestic violence:

- Develop a dedicated revenue source for local public safety.
- Protect the Second Amendment right to bear arms while promoting reasonable & responsible gun ownership.
- Promote effective education, prevention & rehabilitation programs.

7. The United States must use its unique position to promote Democracy & Human Rights abroad & at home, relying on diplomacy & cooperation as a first resort:

- Promote cooperative multinational engagement to promote these values, expand America's goodwill, & build a safe, secure, stable, & just international order.
- Support institutions & programs that promote education, human rights, cultural/service exchanges, labor fairness, environmental stewardship & open economic opportunities in developing countries
- Require that any military goods or components be domestically sourced.

II. Where our communities support the success & well being of all people; *HEALTHCARE & EDUCATION*

1. Provide a safety net for the most vulnerable members of our community, including seniors, children, & the developmentally disabled:
 - Safeguard & maintain existing programs that protect vulnerable populations, such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, & the Veterans Administration.
 - Create a WPA-style program that employs Oregonians to improve & repair our infrastructure.
 - Rebuild the Oregon Health Plan.
2. Ensure high-quality nutrition & medical care are available for all, including children & pregnant women:
 - Establish a universal single-payer healthcare system in Oregon.
 - Ensure access to reproductive health & family planning services for all Oregonians, such as contraceptives & testing, as well as by protecting a woman's right to choose, promoting adoption, & ensuring natal care.
 - Expand local nutrition programs for children & seniors, such as school lunch programs & Meals on Wheels.
3. Continue to strive for comprehensive health care reform:
 - Establish a universal, single-payer health-care system in Oregon.
- Add dental & vision coverage to Medicare.
- Prioritize preventative medicine & prevent health insurance providers from discriminating against residents with pre-existing conditions.
4. Invest in educational opportunities that enable all of Oregon's children & youth to succeed in a changing world, including the expansion of both college & vocational opportunities:
 - Prioritize the reduction of class sizes in elementary education & strengthen core state curriculum standards to enable students to succeed in post-secondary.
 - Support the DREAM Act & its state-level counterpart.
 - Reestablish vocational education & tailor programs to economic opportunities in the 21st century.
5. Fully fund successful educational and front-end practices for our children & youths:
 - Fully-fund the Oregon Education Model.
 - Establish "Gateway to College" as a standard intervention program for at-risk youth.
 - Treat drug addiction as a medical (rather than a criminal) issue. Utilize Drug & Peer Courts to rehabilitate juvenile offenders.

6. Recognize the sacrifices made by our military veterans in body, mind, & spirit to preserve our way of life:

- Support mechanisms that provide jobs for veterans.

- Expedite the process that allows veterans to see a specialized doctor.

- Support the building of a VA hospital in Eugene, as proposed by Representative DeFazio.

III. Where both public & private institutions are accountable to the people, using efficient & effective practices for the growth & health of our state;

ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Limit the influence of corporations & other moneyed interests on our political system:

- Encourage our Congressional representatives to introduce & support a Constitutional amendment which makes it clear that corporations do not have the Constitutional rights of people, & that any involvement of corporations in politics must be transparent & subject to limitations.
- Support Senator Merkeley & Representative Schrader's proposed amendment language in a broader Constitutional amendment addressing corporate personhood.
- Revoke corporate charters when a corporation does not comply with its requirement to provide for the public benefit; the requirement of courts to consider only shareholder profit should be overturned with a Constitutional amendment if necessary.

2. Regulate financial institutions, because risk analysis cannot properly account for fundamental uncertainty:

- Restore the Glass-Steagall Act, which would restore essential regulation &

separation of banking & financial institutions.

- Enact a Wall Street speculator's tax (e.g. Representative Defazio's proposal) to high frequency financial trading for speculative purposes.

- Regulate derivatives to control the negative effects of speculation on Wall Street.

3. Recognize that corporations that are too big to fail are too big:

- Break apart corporations that are "too big to fail," so that the failure of a corporation does not ever again require taxpayer subsidy to prevent widespread financial calamity.

- Mergers that allow a corporation to get close to "too big to fail" should not be allowed by enforcing our anti-trust laws.

4. Counteract efforts designed to limit peoples' participation in the political process & push for public financing of election campaigns:

- Overturn the Supreme Court's 2011 decision in *Arizona Free Enterprise Club v. Bennett* & allow public campaign financing to match excessive private campaign spending.

- Protect stockholders' interests through the creation of legislation and the SEC enforcement of laws disallowing corporations from using stockholders' money for political purposes, without the approval of a supermajority of their stockholders.
 - Change the ORS to allow Oregon's college students to levy fees against themselves for the purpose of lobbying.
5. Build a strong rainy day fund to ensure the basic needs of public safety, health, & education can be met in emergencies:
- Eliminate Oregon's Constitutional requirement that tax rates depend upon revenue predictions (the Kicker Refund).
 - Call upon legislators to work toward a more progressive state income tax.
 - Encourage legislators to refer Measure 5 back to the voters in order to remove property tax limitations to allow additional revenue for public services.
6. Encourage institutions to adopt practices shown to improve effectiveness & efficiency:
- Because health insurance corporations are not as effective or efficient as Medicare in disbursing necessary health care funds, work to develop an efficient & affordable single-payer system.
 - Hold corporations & their executive officers criminally accountable when they commit fraud.

IV. Where the worth, dignity, rights & opinions of every person are respected.

CIVIL RIGHTS

1. Invest in opportunities that empower citizens, building leadership, seek common ground & improve community relations, through effective dialogue & consensus building on core issues:
- Create a leadership fund that specifically sets aside tax dollars to be used by organizations that serve marginalized communities to create empowerment & advocacy workshops.
 - Promote town-hall meetings that provide opportunities for civic participation & for marginalized communities to have their voices heard on issues that affect them.
 - Encourage & support coordination to organize marginalized community members to lobby & run for office.
2. Protect the fundamental equal rights of every Oregon resident or visitor, especially against attacks on our basic liberties:

- Taking into account our common welfare, create laws that protect the individual rights of all Oregon residents, including the right to health, home, privacy & marriage, & freedom from hunger & fear.
 - Pass an amendment to the State Constitution to guarantee the basic human right of all Oregonians to marry the person they love.
 - Prohibit the use of non-lethal weapons such as tasers, pepper-spray, sound cannons, & chemical agents as compliance tools, except when the safety of officials or the public is truly in jeopardy.
3. Treat the root causes of our social programs, not just the symptoms, bravely facing ingrained social issues like racism, homophobia, sexism, & classism:
- Pass legislation at all levels of government to decriminalize homelessness.
 - Fully-fund family court, drug court, & other intervention programs to reduce domestic violence & the abuse of children, the elderly, & the disabled, with an aim towards keeping families together & preventing youths from landing on the streets.
 - Invest in building coalitions & educating about marginalized communities as a way of exposing, reducing, & confronting discrimination imbedded in our culture.
4. Protect the rights of all individuals, regardless of faith, creed, religious affiliation or practices, or lack thereof:
- Base policy regarding religious expression on protecting both freedom of expression & the principle of the Separation of Church & State.
 - Protect individual liberty from religious edicts that would restrict personal rights, such as the right to choose methods of family planning, the right of individuals to marry the one they love, & the right of children to receive necessary healthcare.
 - Regulate & restrict public financing of organizations such as hospitals & medical providers that deny services based on religious beliefs.
5. Protect the rights of Oregonians to make health care & quality of life decisions with dignity & privacy, whether at the beginning, middle, or end of life:
- Require health insurance companies doing business in Oregon to pay for doctor consultation for end of life decisions & advance directives.
 - While defending a woman's right to choose, work to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies, or equip expecting mothers with resources they may need, by providing contraception & emergency contraception, pre-natal care, adoption assistance, nutrition programs, & childcare.
 - Fully-fund the Oregon Health Plan, providing universal healthcare to all Oregonians & ensuring that everyone has access to affordable coverage, including hearing aids & other prostheses.

6. Recognizing the sacrifice our military veterans made, in body, mind, & spirit to preserve our way of life, we ensure their dignity through adequate funding for their physical & mental health:

- Ensure that Oregon National Guard soldiers, & all others who serve our country, have access to the same health care available to other veterans.

- Provide veterans who have incurred neurological injuries or psychological trauma with support & services, for their lifetime if necessary, that hold up to the standard of best practices in diagnosis, treatment, & caregiver support.

- Streamline & fully-fund programs that provide housing, social support, & addiction treatment for our homeless veterans who fought for our country.

**V. Where it is understood that environmental stewardship & a strong sustainable economy are mutually dependent;
*Environment***

1. Encourage the reduction of carbon emissions & greenhouse gasses:

- Educate the public as to the costs of not reducing carbon & other greenhouse gasses.
- Establish a carbon tax to shift from carbon-based to renewable energy systems.
- Support air-monitoring in Oregon.

- Encourage & support public transit & the expansion of safe bicycle & pedestrian commuting.

- Support the installation & use of more electric charging stations around the state.

- Support a robust statewide rail system, including a high-speed train for the I-5 corridor, electric trains, & freight trains.

2. Promote the creation of a green economy, including solar, wind, & water energy production, installation & use:

- Promote educational funding to primary, secondary, & vocational schools to support training in green technologies.
- Promote energy efficient residential & commercial buildings.
- Continue tax incentives & permit fee reductions for green energy efficiency.

4. Invest in energy conservation, efficiency, & independence:

- Minimize packaging, especially non-recyclable packaging, & discourage the use of plastic bags.

- Continue & expand refund & recycling programs such as the bottle bill & redemption centers.

- Promote programs that encourage energy conservation & environmental stewardship by individuals, businesses, & organizations. Educate the public about hazards of various methods of

3. Invest in the development & use of clean & efficient transportation systems:

resource extraction (such as hydro-fracturing, “fracking”).

5. Lead the nation in the sustainable & responsible use of our natural resources:

- Protect & restore our water resources, including watersheds, groundwater, rivers, & lakes, such as through strict buffer-zone standards for toxic applications, fertilizers, logging, & development.
- Preserve the health of our forests & protect the remaining old-growth forests for future generations.
- Protect Oregon’s farmlands from the encroachment of urban sprawl.

6. Our environment can be productive without being destroyed—promote the economic foundations of recreational uses, tourism, & quality of life:

- Support Oregon’s efforts to develop a science-based marine spatial planning process for managing our oceanic & coastal resources.
- Support efforts to investigate & prosecute environmental crime.
- Support the Integrated Pest Management Program (IMP) concerning the use of toxic substances on public property in order to preserve & protect the quality of life for Oregonians.
- Protect & restore the native stocks of salmon & other fish by improving dams, restoring habitat, reducing pollution, & other scientific-based methods.