

## Douglas County Democratic Party Platform 2008

Due to the extreme nature of the assault on our founding documents and the rule of law in America over the past 25 years, we feel that we, as a people, must address basic functions paramount to reestablishing our government's sovereignty as one that truly is of, by and for the people.

- 1). **Eliminate Electronics from the vote cast and counting process** - In order to reclaim our most precious and valuable right, that of our individual vote, we must assure that it is counted fairly. To assure a fair vote count, electronic technology must be completely eliminated from the voting process. Electronic technology is an open door for vote count and election manipulation. Ask yourself why banks, the military and major corporations spend literally billions of dollars a year in maintaining electronic security, and yet we continually hear about hackers' successes. Timely reporting can easily take place by audited hand counting of paper ballots at the precinct level and subsequent reporting by monitored voice transmission through a trusted third party. There is absolutely no need for haste in reporting election results. The most important factor is a fair and accurate vote count and its subsequent aggregation.
- 2). **Eliminate Electoral College** - begin the process to make a constitutional amendment which will eliminate the Electoral College.
- 3). **Federal funding of all federal elections** - We must federally fund all federal elections nationwide. This will not eliminate the influence of money, but it will facilitate our elected representatives in spending their time doing the business of the people. Presently, on average, they must raise \$20,000 a day towards their reelection. Federally-funded elections will also moderate the influence of the media in their insistence on declaring the candidates with the most money raised as the most viable, and ignoring all others regardless of popular opinion. It will also temper the influence of power brokers and lobbyists.
- 4). **Reestablish and aggressively enforce federal anti-trust laws** - We must insist that the Congress and the Justice Department reestablish and aggressively enforce anti-trust laws. This will decentralize the accumulation of money and influence from the hands of a few individuals and corporations. It will prevent large corporations from owning all of the television, radio, cable and newspaper outlets in any particular market, thus allowing consumers and society in general a more diverse dispersion of and access to information, opinion and

services. It will also limit the ability of corporations to unduly influence local, state and federal elected officials.

5). **Revamp the ‘Executive Orders’ power of the Presidency –**

We believe the government tool of “Executive Orders” must be revamped. It is a useful procedure tool for implementing acts of the executive branch, but the past administration has used it as a technique of making de facto Legislation in absolute rejection of Constitutional Law, by-passing Congress, and the legal law-making branch of our government. They have instituted false-legal paperwork that implies having the force of law, but which are random, not legally-approved statements of executive branch powers. It is a tool that attempts to subversively take away American citizens’ control of the government – in direct contradiction to the purpose and intent of our Constitution and nation from its birth. It is a method to destroy the foundation of American Democracy. Executive orders do not have standing unless backed by and in concordance with Congressional specification and law.

6). **Habeas Corpus** - We believe the right of Habeas Corpus must be immediately and irrevocably re-instated. It is a core principle of the United States of America and was won as a principle of government after generations and generations of people gave their lives to establish and defend it as a FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT in a MORAL SOCIETY. Habeas Corpus can never be revoked or suspended.

7). **Americas Free Choice Act** - We call for the State Democratic Party to adopt as part of its platform to support and recommend the passage of this Act. The Act states that the freedom of workers to organize unions and bargain collectively with employers is guaranteed and promoted.

8). **Posse Comitatus** - We call for the State Democratic Party to adopt as a plank in its platform a demand for the reinstatement of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878. The statute generally prohibits federal military personnel and units of the United States National Guard under federal authority from acting in a law enforcement capacity within the United States.

9). **Education**

a. The Democratic Party of Nevada supports a quality education for every child by providing the funding needed for all students, to include the gifted not be excluded from accountability, to achieve educational excellence. Such an education requires adequate and equitable funding from public tax sources for schools to obtain the

resources (e.g., personnel, programs, materials, buildings, and technology) to meet the needs of all students.

b. We support the concept that public monies not be used for students to attend sectarian schools or other institutions in order to obtain educational services available to them in public schools to which they have reasonable access. In addition, we believe any private school or agency that receives public funding through voucher plans, tax credits, or other funding/financial arrangements must be subject to all accountability measures and regulations required of public schools.

c. We urge Congress and the President to amend the No Child Left Behind Act to allow the use of multiple sources of evidence to assess student learning and school effectiveness, to restore a class size reduction program to give students more individualized attention, to increase the number of highly qualified teachers in our nation's public schools, and to fully fund its obligations to America's public school students. Federal funding for education should be increased to the states and all federal mandates should be federally funded.

d. We urge the Department of Education to develop curriculum to enhance students' financial literacy (e.g., personal finance, investments, debt management, savings, retirement planning). Education, pre-K through college, and vocational education is a top priority.

10). **Social Security**

We support the elimination of the Social Security Windfall Elimination Provision for individuals who have qualified for both Social Security and another government pension system and the repeal of the Social Security Government Pension Offset to restore to eligible individuals and survivors the full Social Security benefits earned by their spouse.

11). **Taxes**

a. Tax deduction for payment of college tuition.

b. Repeal alternative minimum tax.

c. Financing or tax credits for home energy efficiency retrofits.

d. Preserve current tax rates for interest dividends and capital gains of middle-income households under \$150,000 per year of income.

e. Tax relief for the middle class.

f. In order to protect the nation's farms, ranches and family businesses, increase the estate tax deduction to \$10,000,000 and index for inflation.

12). **Environment**

a. Elevate the promotion of awareness of global climate change to the highest priority for the Democratic Party of Nevada.

b. Stop the deterioration of and increase funding for our National Parks and Forest Service.

13). **Energy**

a. The Democratic Party of Nevada urges Governor Gibbons to stop the fast-tracking of three new coal power plants.

b. The Democratic Party of Nevada urges the Nevada Legislature and the Governor of Nevada to provide non-tax based incentives for individual homeowners and businesses to invest in solar and wind energy.

c. The Democratic Party of Nevada urges the Nevada Legislature and the Governor of Nevada to require utility companies to further invest in solar, wind and geothermal energy, and aggressively promote the development of renewable energies and energy conservation principles.

d. The Democratic Party of Nevada urges the Nevada Legislature and the Governor of Nevada to take steps to support the Phase-out of coal-fired power plants in Nevada and the U.S. by 2020; and systematically and effectively encourage through tax incentives increased energy efficiency in residential, commercial and industrial settings.

e. The Democratic Party of Nevada urges the creation of incentives for low-emission vehicles and conservation efforts in transportation policy, including Research and Development funds for alternative fuels/green energy, and reduction of fossil fuel emissions.

f. We support the development of energy sources other than coal, ethanol and nuclear power.

g. Enact legislation to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by the year 2050.

h. The Democratic Party shall develop an energy policy that supports energy conservation, renewable energy resource development, and national energy self-sufficiency. Further, that the Party shall promote energy choices that have the least adverse impact on human health and the environment.

i. We urge the control of greenhouse gas emissions through adoption of a national cap in trade program.

- 14). **Women's Issues** - Support low-cost family planning. Adoption of pro-choice/women's right to choose regarding matters of family planning without government interference.
- 15). **International Conflict Resolution** - Incorporate into the appropriate federal venue language which strengthens support of U.S. pursuit of multilateral, international resolution of conflict.
- 16). **End the war.** No more troops or military bases in Iraq and Afghanistan. Exercise diplomacy options. Develop a comprehensive plan to remove combat troops from Iraq. Dismantle/retrieve all military facilities and scale back the Embassy. Provide humanitarian aid with oversight, and provide facilities that encourage, protect and defend women and children.

Afghanistan - Stop narcotics trade; stop human slave trade; increase International Peacekeeping troops; deliver on the Marshall Plan especially clinics & schools. Provide alternative economy opportunities for its people. Stop consorting with Warlords.

- 17). **Water Resources** - The Democratic Party of Nevada calls on all levels of government to fully, independently, and honestly assess the entire and complete impact of proposed large-scale rural to urban water transfers in Nevada, to include analysis of the economic impacts on rural and urban communities, the impacts on natural resources throughout the Great Basin, and the potential for development of alternative water supplies.

**Da'aw'a':ga'a (Lake Tahoe)** is the center of The Washoe Peoples traditional homelands, and the entire community continues to be concerned about the declining clarity there as well as the lack of access for tribal members to continue traditional practices on these lands that should be repatriated to the Washsheshiw (Washoe People).

**Environmental degradation of the Leviathan Mine** area from mining activity has left a Superfund Site on traditional Washoe Homelands. The entire community is concerned that adequate funding must continue to be allocated for the mitigation and maintenance of that disaster.

- 18). **Poverty** – The Democratic party must require the Federal Government to address the issue of poverty and widening income differentials between rich and poor via the tax system and eliminating the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy.
- 19). **Immigration** – The Democratic Party of Nevada urges the Congress and the President to create a timetabled path to permanent residency and citizenship, including a reasonable timetable for undocumented immigrants who want to remain in the U.S., including women, men and children and especially those who do not work outside the home; promote reunification of families, including LGBT families; provisions to improve wages and working conditions of immigrant workers to protect them from exploitation, preserving the provisions addressing Violence Against Women Act, and a more efficient system to process those eligible to work and seek permanent residency/citizenship, one that excludes the building of fences, walls, and prisons at the border and to promote a temporary guest worker program. All persons within our borders must be registered and acknowledged, to prevent unfair wages by unscrupulous employers and vulnerability to criminal elements. Penalties must be implemented and enforced against employers such as fines, loss of business license, etc., for employers that hire and employ illegal immigrants. Prisons and deportation are not the solution. Additionally, First Nations People are the only non-immigrants here and call for a just system of implementing these policies.
- 20). **Equal Pay** – The Democratic Party of Nevada urges the Nevada Legislature and the Governor to pass laws that protect and promote equal pay for women and minorities.
- 21). **Yucca Mountain** – The Democratic Party of Nevada demands that the Federal Government and the President stop further funding of any kind for the Yucca Mountain project and cancel plans for its implementation. We demand that any presidential candidate creates a system of storage for nuclear waste products that is localized. We do not support the proposed rail routes for transport of nuclear waste nationally, nor will we support the storage of it at Yucca Mountain. Our other concern is about the disproportionate effects of environmental racism due to the history of weapons testing on

indigenous homeland; including the radiation poisoning of “downwinders” on Shoshone homelands.

- 22). **Elimination Of Torture** – The Democratic Party of Nevada declares that any and all use of torture is totally unacceptable, that it is contrary to the founding principles of the United States and in opposition to the founding principles of a democratic society. America must abolish all forms of torture now, without exception and interrogation practices that insult moral and ethical principles. We condemn torture practices, cruel and unusual punishment as prescribed by the Constitution.
- 23). **Health care** – That health care is a right for all citizens and is a part of the establishment of a more perfect union. That of promotion of the general welfare by our government which is by proclamation of, by and for the people; implement Universal Healthcare, implement affordable long-term coverage for Alzheimer’s and other debilitating diseases. Provide community-based mental health care and proper care and housing for the chronically mentally ill. Eliminate the current prescription drug law and replace it with one that actually helps the people who need medication and cannot afford it. Eliminate the donut hole and scrutinize and eliminate all laws written by and for the pharmaceutical industry. Healthcare concerns for low and moderate income people are great, and American Indians want the Indian Health Services System to have adequate funding to continue care for their community members and off-reservation families. This concern remains paramount.
- 24). **State Party: Impeach George W. Bush** – that the Nevada Democratic Party put forth as a plank in its platform the mandatory impeachment of George W. Bush for violating the Constitution in the following manner:
- **Deception of Congress and the American Public**
    - Committing a Fraud Against the United States (18 U.S.C. § 371)
    - Making False Statements Against the United States (18 U.S.C. § 1001)
    - War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148)
    - Misuse of Government Funds (31 U.S.C. § 1301)
  - **Improper Detention, Torture, and Other Inhumane Treatment**
    - Anti-Torture Statute (18 U.S.C. § 2340-40A)
    - The War Crimes Act (18 U.S.C. § 2441)
    - The Geneva Conventions and Hague Convention: International Laws Governing the Treatment of Detainees

- United Nations Convention Against Torture, and Cruel, Inhumane and Degrading Treatment: International Laws Governing the Treatment of Detainees
- Command Responsibility (for known illegal acts of subordinates in the military)
- Detainment of Material Witnesses (18 U.S.C. § 3144)
- **Retaliating against Witnesses and Other Individuals**
  - Obstruction Congress (18 U.S.C. § 1505)
  - Whistleblower Protection (5 U.S.C. § 2302)
  - The Lloyd-Lafollette Act, or "anti-gag rule" (5 U.S.C. § 7211)
  - Retaliating against Witnesses (18 U.S.C. § 1513)
- **Leaking and other Misuse of Intelligence and other Government Information**
  - Revealing Classified Information in Contravention of Federal Regulations (Executive Order 12958/Classified Information Nondisclosure Agreement)
  - Statutory Prohibitions on Leaking Information (18 U.S.C. § 641, etc.)
- **Laws Governing Electronic Surveillance**
  - Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (50 U.S.C. § 1801, et seq.)
  - National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. chapter 15)
  - Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. § 222)
  - Stored Communications Act of 1986 (18 U.S.C. § 2702)
  - Pen Registers or Trap and Trace Devices (18 U.S.C. § 3121)
- **Laws and Guidelines Prohibiting Conflicts of Interest (28 U.S.C. § 528, etc.)**

25). **Caucuses** – Form a committee to make caucuses more inclusive.

26). **Separation of Church & State** - In the United States, separation of church and state is often identified with the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." this admonition must be brought to the public eye and made an issue of importance. The current administration has gone way too far in providing billions of dollars to private religious organizations and that initiative must be rescinded.

27). **Douglas County Specific** - The Douglas County Commission has always been composed of Republican Party members. We insist that commissioners develop better systems for communication and notification of the Washoe Tribal Government when there are issues that directly affect tribal homelands and Washoe Tribal members.

**Anti-racist education** - is not a priority of the Douglas County School District and whereas the No child Left Behind Act has further decimated tribal children's school success. The community demands a more equitable and historically relevant curriculum, indigenous language instruction, and cutting-edge educational best practice addressing diversity and equity concerns in a new Elementary and Secondary Education Act that meets the true needs of Tribal children who have historically suffered discrimination in public schools.

- 28). **Full mandatory funding for the Veterans Administration** - Ensure the VA healthcare facilities funding keeps pace with the rate of medical inflation. This would include additional funding during periods of war to keep pace with additional needed staff and medical equipment to properly treat injuries.

Offer Veterans the choice of medical and mental health care facilities, funded by the VA, when the VA cannot offer convenient access.

Endorse the recommendations of the Dole-Shalala Commission including fixing the disgraceful conditions at Walter Reed and all military hospitals.

- Sign the Wounded Warriors Act.
- Implement the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003.
- Cut down on wait-times for Veterans of all war eras, applying for eligible benefits.
- Increase death benefits to military members killed in the line of duty to no less than \$250,000. Increase compensation for next of kin giving care, during recovery process of traumatic injured military members.
- Reject President Bush's efforts to divert veterans away from the VA healthcare system.
- Increase funding for Veterans Employment and Training Service.

- 29). **Corporate Reform** - Raise minimum wage to \$10.00/hour. Reign in corporate parachutes for failed companies. Excessive executive compensation needs to be scrutinized and made more reasonable.

- 30). **Justice system** - Larger number incarcerated for drug use without solving drug use problem. "War on drugs" is failed policy and needs elimination. We need to be stricter on our choice of Judges and appoint only those who uphold the Constitution and do not cater to partisan interests.

- 31). **Wild Horses** - End all wild horse round-ups in Nevada and all western states.
- 32). **Space Exploration** – Promote the utilization and exploration of space.
- 33). **Demand Elected Officials Take Action** - We call on our elected officials at all levels to work together to ensure that these issues be incorporated into the party platform and vigorously acted upon.