

## **PREAMBLE**

The Democratic Party has carried out its commitment to freedom, fairness, human rights, and responsible government for over 200 years, a tradition we continue as a part of College Democrats of America, which is the official student outreach arm of the Democratic National Committee. North Carolina's tradition of progressive government is due to the leadership of a strong Democratic Party.

The College Democrats of North Carolina support the Democratic Party's commitment to freedom, fairness, human rights, and responsible leadership.

The Democratic Party fully supports the Bill of Rights and opposes any frivolous or malicious amendments to the Constitution, which limit the inalienable rights of American citizens. This Party shall provide an avenue for the free and open expression of diverse ideas and opinions, including the right of every person to dissent, and shall work to promote government which is responsive to the legitimate needs, interests, and aspirations of every man, woman, and child in a manner which does not diminish human dignity or those fundamental rights, which are the birthright of all people of a free and democratic nation.

The College Democrats of North Carolina and its affiliated organizations provide a vehicle for college students to advance the principles of the Democratic Party. This Platform outlines the College Democrats of North Carolina's views on the important issues facing our state and nation. The name of this organization shall be the College Democrats of North Carolina, hereafter referred to in this document as "The CDNC."

## **ACTIVISM AND CIVIL ENGAGEMENT**

Activism and Civil engagement are core values of the College Democrats of North Carolina. We believe we are a party of action, and a party of progress. The CDNC will work diligently to increase our membership and create new chapters within the great state of North Carolina, as well as increase membership activity in the statewide and local elective and legislative processes.

The CDNC membership must live out the values and principles of the party not only through electing and supporting democratic officials and candidates, but also through community service, and activism. This is done through public or private foundations,

not-for-profit and non-partisan organizations, religious organizations, or as individuals. The College Democrats of North Carolina pride themselves on living up to North Carolina's Motto – "To be rather than to seem"

## **CONSUMER PROTECTION AND FINANCIAL SECURITY**

The CDNC believes that the United States Federal and State Government, at all levels should protect citizens from predatory and dangerous business practices.

The CDNC urges government agencies to continue their efforts to protect consumers and to promote confidence in a marketplace that is free from price fixing, unfair restraints of trade, deception, fraud, and other abuses of the free enterprise system.

The CDNC supports policies and regulations that ensure fair and responsible practices on the part of the business community, however we urge policy makers to avoid excessive regulation that unnecessarily inhibits free enterprise.

The CDNC supports legislation to guarantee that affordable insurance will be widely available, while respecting claimants' rights to fair compensation for injury and loss.

the CDNC believes that regulation of financial institutions and public utilities should emphasize high-quality service at a reasonable cost for all consumers, particularly for basic services.

The CDNC supports efforts to strengthen income support programs (i.e., unemployment compensation, Social Security, veterans' benefits, etc.).

The CDNC supports a regulatory environment that allows businesses to more effectively compete in the global marketplace, as well as necessary protection of North Carolina-based businesses from unfair trade practices of other states and countries.

The CDNC favors trade agreements that will not harm the environment, compromise our labor standards, or ignore the open markets of other countries around the world.

## **HEALTH CARE**

Without access to adequate health care, a person cannot contribute to society or

support him/herself and his/her family. Therefore, we support a government that ensures health care access to all regardless of geographic location, income race, age, gender, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, disability, primary language, or station in life.

The CDNC supports the Affordable Care Act and all the laws that are required of it.

The CDNC supports health care reform that provides universal affordable access and portable coverage, expanded preventive health care, and public efforts to provide the prenatal care needed to reduce infant mortality.

The CDNC supports a mental health system that provides access to appropriate treatment for mental, behavioral, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse.

The CDNC strongly supports bio-medical research leading to the prevention and treatment of diseases. Recognizing the critical role that stem cell research can play in prevention and treatment of diseases, we encourage an increased level of support for stem cell research with appropriate ethical controls.

The CDNC supports adequate funding for HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs. We also support persons with HIV/AIDS receiving sufficient funding for HIV/AIDS medications. We oppose discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS both domestically and internationally.

The CDNC supports programs that will assist small businesses who provide health insurance to their employees.

The CDNC supports the mandatory insurance coverage of prevention and treatment of gender specific health concerns. We also support legislation that encourages biomedical research into gender specific health concerns.

The CDNC believes that access to family planning services are a vital component of healthcare.

The CDNC believes that contraceptive methods, including emergency contraception, should be included in medical coverage.

The CDNC supports a woman's right to reproductive freedom, and supports legislation to keep abortive procedures safe and accessible. We also support including abortive procedures as part of comprehensive health coverage provided by governmental and private insurance programs.

The CDNC supports state and local health departments' programs to provide quality pre-natal care for all mothers during pregnancy.

The CDNC supports teen pregnancy prevention efforts across the state through family

planning programs, access to contraception, and comprehensive sex education in public schools.

The CDNC supports a comprehensive sex education program in public schools that discusses abstinence but also provides factual information on human anatomy and biology, birth control and other contraceptive methods, and sexually transmitted diseases, and other risks associated with unprotected sexual contact.

The CDNC strongly believes that teens should have confidential access to public health and mental health programs.

The CDNC supports an individual's right to choose their own health care providers without interference from government or health insurance providers.

The CDNC encourages policies that make the practice of medicine in rural areas an attractive option for health care providers.

The CDNC also encourages policies that make the practice of general and internal medicine an attractive option for healthcare providers.

## **EDUCATION**

Under our state constitution, North Carolinians have a right to a high quality education. Our state must have an outstanding education system in order to produce an informed community, to promote economic development, and to build for an economic future characterized by high-skill and high-wage employment.

The CDNC believes that access to quality education is critical, and no one should be denied opportunities regardless of their race, age, gender, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, disability, primary language, location, or station in life.

The CDNC believes public schools should offer a comprehensive education in the sciences, mathematics, humanities, arts, and health and fitness.

The CDNC supports programs to expand pre-school opportunities such as the “Smart Start” and “More at Four” initiatives to improve pre-school education and to involve parents/families in the education of their young children.

The CDNC supports legislation that will raise K-12 teacher salaries across the state to the national average, and we support efforts to streamline bureaucracy to permit increased focus on quality teaching.

The CDNC supports efforts to reduce K-12 class size and emphasize the fundamental

skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic while exposing children to innovative ideas, information about other cultures, and advancement in technology.

The CDNC opposes any under funded or unfunded federal mandates, such as “No Child Left Behind.”

The CDNC supports adequate funding of the UNC university system, the preservation of academic freedom at those institutions, and equal access for all North Carolinians.

The CDNC Supports maintaining low tuition for in-state students and the availability of financial aid for all qualified students with low and moderate incomes.

The CDNC acknowledges an individual's right to access to affordable higher education opportunities, regardless of ability to pay. Public Universities and governments should provide need-based aid to students seeking higher education. Aid should focus more on grants than loans to help reduce student debt.

The CDNC supports the funding and development of all North Carolina community colleges and their programs.

The CDNC supports vocational education, including high school programs and post-high school high-tech studies under the leadership of the North Carolina Community College System.

The CDNC supports programs that combat illiteracy for children and adults, including health literacy.

The CDNC realizes that education does not end with formal schooling; we support initiatives to encourage life-long learning among within our communities.

The CDNC supports the creation of tax policies that support education and families by offering child and educational tax credits.

## **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

The College Democrats of North Carolina believe that everyone deserves a fair opportunity to achieve economic success. We can achieve this ideal by promoting a strong economy, a fair tax system and an effective and accessible educational system. The CDNC supports a fiscally responsible government.

The CDNC supports a progressive and reliable tax system that allows the state's businesses to remain competitive. State tax laws should promote ease of compliance and low cost administration.

The CDNC supports the promotion of a diverse North Carolina economy, especially the attraction and expansion of technology-oriented and knowledge-based businesses and

industries and the retention and improvement of agriculture and manufacturing.

The CDNC believes that all workers should be paid a fair minimum wage, work in safe and healthy conditions, and have access to training to prepare for changes in the labor market.

The CDNC supports employment laws and practices that prevent discrimination both in the public and private sectors on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status.

The CDNC supports sufficient unemployment benefits for all workers so that they can subsist while searching for employment.

The CDNC supports small business development. Tax incentives should be designed to support the expansions of businesses within the borders of our state as well as the relocation of businesses to North Carolina from other states.

The CDNC supports increased funds for building affordable housing and for expanding the dream of homeownership.

The CDNC supports the building of a widespread public transportation system throughout North Carolina as a tool to link rural and urban North Carolina and to generate economic growth.

The CDNC supports the continued development of statewide information infrastructures to provide the Internet and other means of communication to all areas of the state to promote the economic, educational, and social goals of North Carolina.

## **GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS**

Any attempt at Democracy must be accompanied by fair and easy access to the political process. The College Democrats of North Carolina believe that our public policy must reflect this mindset and encourage our leaders to support policies that allow all our citizens to be heard.

The CDNC believes that voting is both a right and a responsibility, and that impediments to the exercise of that right should not be tolerated. We support efforts to register historically and currently underrepresented populations.

The CDNC supports the passage of an amendment to our national constitution to negate the effects of the *Citizens United v FEC* ruling.

The CDNC supports the passage and enforcement of campaign finance reform laws to minimize the effect of money on the ability of a candidate to compete.

The CDNC supports the passage of legislation to help make the voting public more aware of the origins of funding for political advertisements and organizations.

The CDNC is opposed to any legislation that requires the presentation of a photo ID before casting a ballot, that does not allow for as many forms of acceptable identification as possible including, but not limited to, university-issued student identification.

The CDNC believes that any major changes to our election laws must be accompanied by a sufficiently-funded voter education effort and must not place an overwhelming share of the financial burden on our county governments.

The CDNC oppose any efforts to reduce the number of days North Carolinians are able to early vote as well as any attempt to do away with same-day registration.

The CDNC recognize that Sunday early voting has been incredibly efficient in our state's attempt to make voting easier and more accessible to our citizens and oppose any attempt to ban it using religious justifications.

The CDNC supports legislation that encourages high schools to hold registration and pre-registration drives to encourage our young people to engage in the political process.

## **AGRICULTURE**

The CDNC believes that an agricultural economy built to last is integral to the affordability of our food, the independence of our energy supply, and the security of America's middle class.

The CDNC supports agriculture from the small farms that feed the community to the large farms that feed the world.

The CDNC supports agriculture's role in securing America's food security and making

our country an ambassador of food aid to countries across the world.

The CDNC supports a strong farm safety net, with increased availability of crop insurance and emergency disaster assistance to help farmers and ranchers keep their farms in business after natural disasters and crop loss.

The CDNC supports planning for a stronger agricultural future by increasing funding for research and development to improve productivity and food security.

The CDNC supports balancing our nation's budget on the backs of our agriculture industry.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION**

No citizen of North Carolina should live in fear of crime or in retaliation for doing what is right. The CDNC supports progressive efforts to reduce crime rates throughout the state. The CDNC also embraces the rights guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution. Our personal freedom should not be unreasonably compromised.

The CDNC supports all those who wear the badges of public safety and law enforcement.

The CDNC encourages the funding and organizational support needed by public safety agencies to effectively protect citizens. We also support strict policies on accountability for law enforcement officials (i.e., excessive force).

The CDNC supports and encourages partnerships between schools and local law enforcement to combat illegal drug use and violence in schools.

The CDNC supports the expansion of peer mediation and counseling to all middle and high schools to reduce school violence and vandalism.

The CDNC supports strengthening community policing programs.

The CDNC believes all violent crimes are hate crimes. Violent offenders should be aggressively prosecuted, and sentencing should be firm, fair and consistent.

The CDNC opposes the profiling of suspects on characteristics unrelated to a specific or

anticipated crime.

The CDNC supports the reasonable regulation of firearms including background checks of all gun purchasers, mandatory firearm training and safety courses, and enhanced sentencing for crimes involving firearms.

The CDNC supports elevating the rights of victims to at least equal status of the rights of criminals and the accused.

The CDNC believes that the purpose of incarceration includes rehabilitating inmates so they can successfully assimilate into society upon their release. We encourage revamping the prison system to emphasize rehabilitation, education and job training.

The CDNC supports reform of the juvenile criminal justice system, with emphasis on rehabilitation and separating juvenile offenders from adult offenders.

The CDNC recognizes the passionate feelings surrounding the death penalty. We call on all sides to support a moratorium on executions to permit a thorough study of the accuracy and fairness of capital convictions. The CDNC strongly opposes the execution of the mentally retarded.

The CDNC supports the mandatory registration of convicted sex offenders, as well as neighborhood notification where these offenders live.

The CDNC supports continued research on medical uses for marijuana (and all its forms), and on any additional drugs otherwise banned from legal use.

The CDNC recognizes that the individual right to bear arms is an important part of the American tradition, and we will preserve Americans' Second Amendment right to own and use firearms.

The CDNC believes that the right to own firearms is subject to reasonable regulation. We understand the terrible consequences of gun violence; it serves as a reminder that life is fragile, and our time here is limited and precious.

The CDNC believes in an honest, open national conversation about firearms. We can focus on effective enforcement of existing laws, especially strengthening our background check system, and we can work together to enact common sense improvements—like reinstating the assault weapons ban and closing the gun show loophole—so that guns do not fall into the hands of those irresponsible, law-breaking

few.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

The CDNC works to increase the health of both persons and the land by supporting sustainable and clean environmentally sound policies and practices. The CDNC believes that the wellbeing of North Carolina's communities depend on a clean and safe environment to work, life and play in; for us now and for future generations.

The CDNC believes that the policies and practices of individuals and businesses should work to minimize pollution. Pollutions in air, water and land harm not only the earth but effect the lives of North Carolinans. We all have the right to live in an environment that is safe for all of us.

The CDNC encourages the use of renewable alternative sources, for both business and home and supports legislation that keeps our environment safe. The CDNC believes that a decreases in dependence on carbon based fuels; coal, oil and natural gases, would have a positive impact on the entire state. The CDNC will encourage North Carolina to adopt a more diverse State Energy Portfolio which would include the use of wind, solar and other renewable sources. The CDNC supports the continuation of Productions Tax Credits (PTCs) for wind production on the coast and The CDNC stood with Governor Beverly Perdue when she vetoed legislation in 2012 lifted a ban on hydraulic fracturing and opened the door to shale gas exploration without environmental protections.

The CDNC stands against the mining technique of Mountain Top Removal. North Carolina is the number one user of Mountain Top Removal Coal (MTR) based energy which has destroyed over 500 mountains in the Appalachian Mountain Range without providing historical mining communities employment opportunities. MTR removes the top of mountains to extract coal and in the process destroys forest, rives, air, underwater tables and poisons entire communities.

The CDNC wishes to support the families of mining communities in transitioning into other sectors of the work force.

The CDNC supports North Carolina in becoming an innovating state in alternative energy development. With the work of universities, business and the state, NC has potential to use new technology to promote economic growth, job development and give our state a competitive advantage in this area of development. North Carolina is open

for business.

The CDNC supports initiatives that require private and public institutions to recycle waste that is fit to be recycled, and encourages the expansion of recycling programs where feasible. The CDNC encourages individuals and business to practice reduction programs to decrease the resources used.

The CDNC supports sustainable logging and timber practices from North Carolina forests and when building in North Carolina. We Logging and timber from renewable sources

The CDNC supports sustainable logging and timber management techniques that foster reforestation and provide a viable habitat for our native wildlife. It is important that we all support logging from renewable sources.

The CDNC supports strengthening laws against illegal dumping of waste and toxic chemicals, and call for aggressive prosecution of those who violate these laws. Those who illegally damage our environment should pay for the cost of clean-up.

The CDNC urges constant vigilance to ensure the safety of existing nuclear power facilities and the development of efficient and safe means to dispose of or reuse nuclear and hazardous wastes. We also support transitioning to other means of safer energy production.

The CDNC opposes the siting of hazardous waste generating and disposal facilities in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. Those in lower socioeconomic areas are disproportionately disadvantaged by environmental degradation.

The CDNC supports the preservation of green spaces through investing in public parks, sportsman's access areas in city, state and national parks and protecting the environment that we all benefit from. We encourage strategic development to preserve the public land that is so important to North Carolina.

The CDNC supports the local waterways in North Carolina and encourages policies that protects from dumping, overusing and pollution in rivers, water tables, lakes and the ocean. Supporting waterways are important in keeping wildlife healthy, creating access to clean drinking water, and supporting the economy that revolves around our beautiful North Carolina water sources.

The CDNC supports the United States Environmental Protecting Agencies enforcing

rules and regulations in North Carolina to ensure protection to our land and people.

The CDNC urges constant vigilance to ensure the safety of existing nuclear power facilities and the development of efficient and safe means to dispose of or reuse nuclear and hazardous wastes.

## **SOCIAL ISSUES**

The CDNC supports all persons living in North Carolina. We believe that it is important to ensure all persons have access to education, health care, job opportunities and religious and cultural practices. The CDNC understands that we must all work for an America where everybody is free.

The CDNC strongly opposes any form of discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, gender, height, weight, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, creed, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status. Non-discrimination policies and actions are a key value for the Democratic Party and The CDNC will continue to support legislation and actions that strengthen this important value.

The CDNC supports the women of North Carolina by opposing employment practices of gendered employment inequality and support access to fair pay through equal wages, paid work hours and equal advancement and development opportunities.

The CDNC supports the prosecution in the fullest for those found guilty of sexual abuse, assault, rape, domestic violence or gendered violence. We also support the women and men who have suffered through state services and programs and other treatments.

The CDNC supports full equality for all persons in North Carolina and advocates for the rights of Lesbians Gay Bisexual Transgendered/Transsexual Queer persons (LGBTQ). The CDNC supports marriage for same sex couples, fully inclusive non-discrimination policy for employment, hospital visits, and adoption and property rights.

The CDNC stands firm against the passage of Amendment One in May of 2012 and will support legislations to reverse the impacts of the Amendment.

The CDNC supports religious freedoms without discrimination.

The CDNC supports legal immigration for individuals and families into the United States.

We supports work visas, green cards and other work programs that bring persons into the workforce. We also stand for the fair and equal treatment of all immigrants.

The CDNC supports the passage of the Dream Act at the national level to give young adults who immigrated here as a children the opportunity to attend colleges and join military service to give back to this country.

The CDNC believes that it important for individuals and families to have access to social service programs to provide necessary services and benefits to allow individuals and families to be successful.

The CDNC supports aggressive teen pregnancy prevention efforts across the state.

The CDNC advocates for a worker's right to a fair minimum wage, equality and fair treatment and safe working conditions. We believe it is important to support the work force in North Carolina by offering competitive wages, benefits and diverse employment opportunity with the ability to develop to keep individuals in the state and bring in new businesses.

The CDNC stands against human trafficking and supports aggressive efforts to prevent domestic trafficking, and to track pursue and prosecute traffickers. We also support legislation that provide resources for victims of trafficking.

## **International Relations**

The CDNC believes that acts of war or the declaration of war should be a last means effort.

The CDND advocates for international democracy with universal suffrage set at eighteen years of age. We believe it is important for all persons to have access to information about election have the ability to vote and that elections are open and fair.

The CDNC supports sustainable development in lesser developed countries, which include infrastructure, loans, diverse markets and access to the labor force.

The CDNC supports fair minimum wage and safe working conditions for all and that states adopt and enforce all international standards. We believe that there should be no gendered wages and we disagree with the child labor force that is used and slave labor as a means of production.

The CDNC supports the efforts of the United Nations and other Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) with their development and peace efforts.

The CDNC believes that impendent states should have the ability to regulate and control their natural resources and other productions. We also believe that the capital production should go back into supporting the community and citizens of the state.

The CDNC stands against human trafficking and supports aggressive efforts to prevent domestic trafficking, and to track pursue and prosecute traffickers. We also support legislation that provide resources for victims of forced servitude of any kind, including a pathway to citizenship for international victims.

The CDNC supports the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development agreements and believes that the United States should committee to reduce consumption and transition to more sustainable means of energy use.

The CDNC supports free education systems that are assessable to all. We believe that knowledge is power and that development in a state must come from its citizens.