



Boulder County Democratic Party
2016 Platform

*Freedom, Equality, Economic Prosperity and Social Justice for All
and a Government That Serves the Common Good*

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| BCDP 2016 Essential Platform | 3 |
| BCDP 2016 Comprehensive Platform | |
| Civil Liberties: | 8 |
| <i>We strongly affirm that all persons share equally in the rights of free speech, expression, press and religion.</i> | |
| Civil Rights: | 14 |
| <i>We believe the civil liberties granted by our Constitution must be equally applied to all persons.</i> | |
| Climate Change: | 18 |
| <i>A healthy democracy and a fair and just government are unsupportable without a viable planet and sustainable future.</i> | |
| Shared Economic Prosperity, Finding the Right Balance for the Common Good: | 24 |
| <i>Boulder County Democrats believe that government policies should promote economic prosperity and justice for all.</i> | |
| Education: | 31 |
| <i>The highest quality education must be accessible and affordable for all.</i> | |
| Health Care: | 35 |
| <i>Health care is a basic human right, serves the common good, and is essential to the health of our nation.</i> | |
| Healthy Democracy: | 38 |
| <i>Boulder County Democrats strongly believe government must be of, for and by the People, not corporations.</i> | |
| International Relations and Foreign Policy: | 42 |
| <i>We believe that our nation can work to assist in the resolution of international conflict without imposing its will.</i> | |

Boulder County Democratic Party

2016 Essential Platform

The 2016 Essential Platform is determined through feedback on the Platform Survey provided by all Boulder County registered Democrats that participated in the online survey. The preference statements that received the most “priority” responses are listed under each plank title. These preference statements are referred to by letters and numbers that reflect the comprehensive plank and where it is found numerically within the comprehensive plank. You may choose to review the comprehensive planks to understand these preference statements in the context of all other preference statements.

Civil Liberties:

We strongly affirm that all persons share equally in the rights of free speech, expression, press and religion.

CL 50: We call for legislation to take the influence of money out of the criminal justice system by eliminating all for-profit detention facilities and programs.

CL 60: We call for action to amend the U.S. Constitution to overturn the flawed Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United v. Federal elections Commission – we believe that corporations are not people and that they can and should be regulated to ensure the rights of actual people.

CL 10: We call on our elected leaders to enact and enforce legislation that supports the right to reproductive autonomy, ensuring that all people have access to the full range of affordable, safe, legal and confidential reproductive services, without interference by governmental agencies (including both state and/or federal) or other organizations.

CL 34: We call for our elected leaders to enact legislation that will eliminate mandatory and three-strikes sentencing rules (requiring set and harsh penalties for repeated crimes), which limits judicial discretion.

CL 47: We call for legislation to significantly reduce the use of solitary confinement and ban the use of extreme sensory deprivation, which borders on torture.

CL 39: We call for the decriminalize drug-related activity nationwide, treating separately acts or the potential for acts of violence and the breaking of other laws, regulate and tax them, and end the “War on Drugs.”

CL 54: We call for legislation to abolish the death penalty in the United States.

CL 6: We call for leaders to ensure the right to vote without undue hardship being imposed on the voter to prove who he/she is.

Civil Rights: Diversity, Inclusion and Immigrant Rights:

We believe the civil liberties granted by our Constitution must be equally applied to all persons.

CR 28: Support the Federal bipartisan DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) that provides citizenship for students who finish high school and complete two years of college or military service.

CR 11: Honor existing treaties with Native Americans.

CR 22: Encourage undocumented immigrants to report crimes by repealing the Clear Law Enforcement for Criminal Alien Removal (CLEAR) Act. Use U-visas (giving victims of certain crimes temporary work eligibility) and/or provide streamlined paths to citizenship for undocumented workers who provide information on illegal behavior by their employers, if said workers have not committed crimes themselves.

CR 29: Include civil service as a qualifying option in the DREAM Act to prevent the DREAM Act from becoming a back-door military draft. (The DREAM Act provides citizenship for students who finish high school and complete two years of college or military service.)

CR 2: Establish and adequately fund law enforcement training programs to identify, prevent and end profiling and discrimination.

CR 5: Ensure equality in compensation for all people, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, class, age, disability, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.

CR 1: Ensure that our laws fully protect and promote equality, safety and respect for all aspects of life so that all people can live without fear, abuse or retaliation.

Climate Change:

A healthy democracy and a fair and just government are unsupportable without a viable planet and sustainable future.

CC 1. We support leadership and commitment to policies and incentives that significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with the goal of 80%-90% reduction from current emission levels by 2050.

CC 43. We support eliminating exemptions of resource extraction companies and processes from the: Clean Water Act; Safe Drinking Water Act; Clean Air Act; Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act; Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

CC 6. We support the expansion of public transit, including accessible rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit.

CC 8. We call for legislation that establishes energy security as a national priority, aggressively funding energy efficiency strategies, renewable energy technologies, responsible biofuels and advances in energy storage capacity.

CC 11. We call for legislation that eliminates all subsidies for fossil fuels and ethanol.

CC 27. We call on elected officials to significantly increase and enforce penalties to discourage energy industry violations, considering all real costs of direct and indirect damage done.

CC 57. We call on elected officials to minimizing the use of synthetic chemicals, hormones and antibiotics in agriculture.

CC 58. We call on elected officials to ensuring equitable government support for organic farming and other sustainable and humane agricultural practices.

Shared Economic Prosperity, Finding the Right Balance for the Common Good:

Boulder County Democrats believe that government policies should promote economic prosperity and justice for all.

EP 1. We call on elected officials to require all “too big to fail” banks and financial institutions to be broken into smaller business units that would not be bailed out if they failed to perform.

EP 12. We support an increase the US minimum wage to a base living wage that accounts for the true costs of food, housing, utilities, health care, and transportation in US states having the lowest cost of living and which will be indexed for inflation. States and localities with higher costs of living are highly encouraged to set appropriate higher minimums.

EP 51. We support ensuring the long term solvency of Social Security by eliminating the ceiling on income that is subject to the Social Security tax collected by the IRS.

EP 67. We support greatly reducing our reliance on private military contractors with the goal to totally eliminate their use by the U.S. Military.

EP 55. We support actions and policies to reinvigorate the American economy and rebuild our country’s critical infrastructure, which is required to support an internationally competitive and enduring economic prosperity. Key areas of infrastructure that need immediate attention include: local water and utility systems, the national power grid system, schools, bridges, roads and highways, and mass transportation infrastructure at a national level.

EP 2. We call on elected officials to reduce the risk of financial crisis and the need for federal bailouts by reinstating the Glass-Steagall Act mandating the separation of commercial and investment banking and expanding the scope of the Act to include oversight and regulation of derivatives and to prohibit the inclusion of U.S. home mortgages in derivatives.

Education:

The highest quality education must be accessible and affordable for all.

ED 5. We call for the full funding of a thorough and uniform education with public monies to public schools that are locally controlled.

ED 2. Boulder County Democrats call upon Party leaders, elected officials, and Democrats across Colorado to bring to the electorate a statewide Constitutional amendment ballot measures to: Repeal Article 10, Section 20, of the Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR).

ED 20. We support a curriculum that prepares students with skills of critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, innovation, and collaboration.

ED 22. We support fact-based science and history curricula, presented without bias.

Health Care:

Health care is a basic human right, serves the common good, and is essential to the health of our nation.

HC 1. We support a national, universal health care system, guaranteeing quality, affordable and comprehensive health care for all through a not-for-profit single-payer financed system.

HC 2. We Support efforts to provide for the long-term solvency and adequate funding of: Medicare; Medicaid; and Social Security Disability Insurance.

HC 3. We support legalization and funding for death with dignity (compassionate choices).

HC 37. We support state legislation to promote price transparency by requiring all health care providers, hospitals and insurance companies to provide disclosure of pricing for different procedures.

HC 35. We support a universal health care system, such as the proposed ColoradoCare initiative that operates fully for the benefit of Colorado residents; determined by local needs; with health care premium money remaining in Colorado; governed democratically by members (all Colorado residents) with the interests of the members rather than outside interests being served.

Healthy Democracy:

Boulder County Democrats strongly believe government must be of, for and by the People, not corporations.

HD 8. Boulder County Democrats support a United States Constitutional amendment that would firmly establish that corporations are not persons and are not entitled to first amendment protections, and that the spending of money to influence elections is not protected free speech

HD 12. We support prohibiting the gerrymandering of Congressional districts (the political manipulation or rigging of district lines to favor one or another political party). For example, have truly independent commissions who redraw district maps that are equal in population, are compact and contiguous, are compliant with the US Constitution and the Voting Rights Act, show respect for communities of interest, incorporate visible geographic features (including city, town and county boundaries as well as undivided census tracts) and which result in competitive districts.

HD 1. We support National legislation or a constitutional amendment guaranteeing that every citizen of the United States who is of legal voting age shall have the fundamental right to vote with ease, without restriction and with no threat of disenfranchisement in any public election held in the jurisdiction in which the citizen resides, and that all such votes shall be counted.

HD 36. We support Prohibiting a congressional member on a committee from voting on legislation involving things from which they will reap a direct financial benefit. (E.g. Insider trading, farm, gas and oil and other industry subsidies and incentives.

HD 9. Mandatory public funding for all campaigns that demonstrates a baseline level of support.

HD 11. We support Colorado joining the Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by Popular Vote. (Note: Colorado has 9 electoral votes. Ten jurisdictions, plus the District of Columbia, have already joined, possessing 165 electoral votes, or 30.7% of the 270 Electoral College votes, and 60.1% of the 270 votes needed for the compact to go into effect.)

International Relations and Foreign Policy:

We believe that our nation can work to assist in the resolution of international conflict without imposing its will.

IR 21. We call on elected officials to close as soon as possible the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and put an end to the practice of indefinite detention without a trial.

IR 16. We call on elected officials to maintain strict adherence to international agreements, including the Geneva Conventions, The Nuremberg Principles, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International War Crimes Tribunal that affirm the fundamental rights of all human beings.

IR 20. We call on elected officials to prohibit the use of torture or ‘enhanced interrogation techniques’ under all circumstances, on our own or foreign soil in compliance with International Law.

IR 33. We strongly support the United Nation’s initiatives to put an end to all forms of ethnic cleansing, genocide, mass rape and apartheid.

Boulder County Democratic Party 2016 Comprehensive Platform

Civil Liberties:

Boulder County Democrats believe that all human beings are created equal, being born with inalienable rights to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. The Constitution of the United States, Amendments to the Constitution and International Law, provide Civil Liberties to protect all citizens from arbitrary interference by individuals or by government.

We rely on these basic rights to ensure for the stability and security of our lives, within the framework of existing law, confident that our liberty and pursuit of happiness are limited only by our own choices and will not be undermined by outside forces that seek to restrain the world of possibilities to which we strive.

Along with these basic individual rights come individual responsibilities. If these responsibilities are not upheld and harm consequently comes to others, it is the duty of our government to protect its citizens through the criminal and civil justice systems.

In the process of meting out justice, the government must itself be held to standards of fairness and humanity.

Section I – Individual Human Rights:

Boulder County Democrats affirm our support for the 14 Amendment and its guarantees of the human rights of equality and liberty, including the rights to self-determination and autonomy. We also affirm our support for the fundamental 1st Amendment rights of Freedom of Speech, Expression, Press and Religion for all persons. Personal decisions concerning health, faith, political affiliations, or marriage are the domain of each individual's conscience and belief system and do not require governmental intervention.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon local, state and national leaders to vigilantly reassert basic human rights and ensure:

1. The full separation of church and state.
2. The right to exercise individual speech and expression, conscience and religion (or lack thereof).
3. The right of assembly.
4. The protection of all non-violent protestors from the use of unnecessary force by others, including law enforcement.
5. Free press; the protection of the press from undue influence by government or corporations.
6. The right to vote without undue hardship being imposed on the voter to prove who he/she is.

7. An end to coercion, forced servitude and/or the human trafficking of any person into situations such as, but not limited to, forced marriages, illegal adoptions, sweatshops, and unpaid domestic service.
8. Institute laws, ordinances and policies to fulfill the basic human rights for Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness and ensure that all people have economic resources to access basic necessities of life, including suitable housing, food, healthcare, education, employment and a sustainable future.
9. The right of individuals (including parents/guardians) to make voluntary informed health care decisions as guided by the medical informed consent ethic.

Implied US Constitutional Rights:

Many rights have been inferred from the language, history and structure of the constitution, or from legal precedent, including the right to privacy, the right to autonomy, the right to dignity and the right to an abortion (based upon the right to privacy).

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call on our elected officials to support and ensure the enforcement of legislation, which:

10. Supports the right to reproductive autonomy, ensuring that all people have access to the full range of affordable, safe, legal and confidential reproductive services, without interference by governmental agencies (including both state and/or federal) or other organizations.
11. Supports the right to privacy including the right to sexual activity between consenting adults.
12. Supports marriage equality for all as recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court and is applicable to all states.
13. Supports the right to death with dignity.
14. Supports the right to clean air and clean water for everyone.

The Right to Bear Arms Responsibly:

The Boulder County Democratic Party believes in the 2nd Amendment right to bear arms, and we believe that individuals should be required to take full responsibility for the safe storage and responsible use of such arms. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for commonsense legislation to:

15. Require background checks for all prospective gun purchasers to illuminate illegal possession of guns to felons, violent criminals, domestic abusers and the mentally ill.
16. Require course work toward a license to own a gun including how to clean, safely store it, breakdown and assemble (if necessary), and how to safely use a gun (similar to driver's licenses).
17. Require safe storage for privately owned guns and ammunition.
18. Regulate military-style assault weapons with high capacity ammunition magazines that allow a person to fire a large number of rounds quickly and without having to reload.
19. Regulate purchase of large caliber ammunition and elimination of purchasing armor piercing bullets.
20. Give universities, places of business and communities the right to regulate or restrict weapons on their 'premises'.

21. Remove impediments for data collection and research analysis of said data regarding guns.

Section II – Criminal Justice:

In seeking to enforce the law and thereby protect citizens, government must respect certain individual human rights. Boulder County Democrats believe in the power of the U.S. Constitution and the adversarial criminal justice system to achieve true justice when applied fairly, wisely and without bias. We passionately believe that anyone arrested for any offense is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law and should be treated accordingly. We support implementation by our government of evidence-based, fact-based, just and humanitarian procedures for making arrests, sentencing and incarceration that are designed to keep us safe and secure not just now but in the future. We advocate a balanced approach to justice that seeks to restore the victim, the community and the offender while holding the offender accountable and responsible. When all of the above become the norm of the land, we know that we will reduce tax dollar expenditures and that we will also experience increased public safety.

Investigation, Illegal Search and Seizure:

The 4th Amendment ensures the privacy of U.S. citizens. The government has no legitimate authority to intrude into the private lives of individuals when there is no evidence of threat to the security of others. Since 9/11 and the enactment of the US Patriot Act, US citizens wake up almost daily to news of government infringements on their privacy with the use of technologies not even dreamed of by our Founding Fathers. Electronic communications are routinely monitored and collected for possible review and drone surveillance is becoming a major civil liberties issue. In addition, for-profit corporations monitor Internet activity and collect biometric data from retail shoppers for marketing purposes. Additionally, doctors are being incentivized to convert health care records to electronic format for incorporation into Federal databases and used by Covered Entities at times with no opt-out by citizens to control their private medical information. It is time to reclaim our civil liberties.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for legislation to protect the privacy of all persons from government and corporate intrusion, that accounts for 21st century technologies and will:

22. Forbid the use of drone surveillance of persons on US soil without a warrant being issued showing probable cause.
23. Firm up protections against unreasonable search and seizure, including acquisition and testing of DNA, gathering of cyber materials, use of GPS tracking devices and other technologies existing or developed in the future.
24. End warrantless wiretapping and physical searches of persons or property of US citizens.
25. End immunity for telecommunications companies that facilitate governmental spying on US citizens.
26. Provide citizens the control over their health care records by needing their written consent to share health information with other entities.

Just Procedures for Arrest and Sentencing for Crimes:

Boulder County Democrats believe that personal liberty should be limited only after careful and objective consideration of risk to the greater community, without regard to socioeconomic

status, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age or class. The 5th Amendment includes provisions against abuses by the legal system by guaranteeing that no criminal action can be brought against a citizen without proper justification. The 8th Amendment of the Constitution also stipulates against the use of cruel and unusual punishment.

Arrest and sentencing procedures must be fair and just, respecting the rights of all citizens. Prison beds should be reserved for those who pose a true threat to our communities. An abundance of non-institutional responses should be available for those who require help but not secure holding.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for enactment and enforcement of laws and procedures to:

27. Require that Miranda warnings always be given to a person who is being detained at the first interview by law enforcement except in situations where human safety would be compromised.
28. Ensure that all accused individuals have access to quality defense counsel at the onset of a criminal investigation.
29. Establish and enforce clear, uniform and effective legal guidelines for attaining informed and competent consent for participation in legal procedures from alleged offenders and victims.
30. Ensure that due process be observed for all people detained, including those under suspicion of terrorism.
31. Release any detainee in a timely manner when there is insufficient evidence to hold them.
32. End the practice of over-charging alleged offenders as a motivating tool for plea-bargaining.
33. Ensure all American citizens a trial by jury of their peers and end the use of Military Tribunals or Commissions.
34. Eliminate mandatory and three-strikes sentencing rules (requiring set and harsh penalties for repeated crimes), which limits judicial discretion.
35. Support evidence-based procedures for relatively inexpensive restorative justice and alternative sentencing options.
36. Before a juvenile case is filed in adult court, require judicial review and opportunity for defense and appeal.
37. Decriminalize non-violent age-related misconduct (e.g., curfew, runaway behavior and truancy).
38. Decriminalize underage alcohol abuse, treating separately acts or the potential for acts of violence and the breaking of other laws, in order to encourage the reporting of abuse and ensure for the health of abusers.
39. Decriminalize drug-related activity nationwide, treating separately acts or the potential for acts of violence and the breaking of other laws, regulate and tax them, and end the "War on Drugs."
40. Prioritize the use of and provide funding for effective treatment options over punishment for non-violent misconduct related to mental health issues or addiction.
41. Increase resources to address the treatment of criminal offenders, suffering from mental health conditions, more effectively and permanently.
42. Require ongoing education for all criminal justice system professionals to help them effectively identify and deal appropriately with mental health issues, sexual victimization,

trauma, domestic violence, child abuse/neglect, disability and other factors that may affect individual behaviors.

43. Require strong penalties for gun trafficking.

Incarceration:

Humane treatment is required for all people, even those who have been detained by our legal system. Incarcerated persons should be safe, should receive reasonable care and should have full access to rehabilitation services in order to allow them to become productive members of society upon release.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for legislation and programs which:

44. Reduce overcrowding in our prisons.
45. Provide necessary medical care for all prisoners.
46. Reduce the use of excessive force in prisons.
47. Significantly reduce the use of solitary confinement and ban the use of extreme sensory deprivation, which borders on torture.
48. Ensure that individuals, particularly youth, who are at low risk to the community, are not held in "secure" facilities.
49. Amend current laws regarding juveniles sentenced to life in prison to be eligible after 15 years instead of the current 40 years. Make retroactive the legislation allowing juveniles sentenced to life in prison to seek parole after 40 years.
50. Take the influence of money out of the criminal justice system by eliminating all for-profit detention facilities and programs.
51. Ensure that all correctional programs meet performance standards.
52. Ensure that all incarcerated persons access all rehabilitation programs so they will be productive citizens when they complete their sentences.
53. Restore all constitutional rights upon parole.
54. Abolish the death penalty in the United States.
55. End indefinite detention by the military of alleged terror suspects without charge, trial or representation by counsel.

Victims' Rights and Eminent Domain:

The Constitution and its Amendments define the rights of citizens of the United States to pursue Life, Liberty and Happiness without arbitrary interference by others; when crimes are committed against people, these rights have been violated. We believe that victims of crimes deserve support and should be kept apprised of the status of offenders who have done them harm. The Constitution also stipulates that property cannot be seized without due process and just compensation.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for laws and enforcement of laws to:

56. Ensure that there exists a comprehensive and seamless support system for victims of crimes.
57. Ensure a tort system that allows the full recovery by injured parties of damages (but does not make a family of the offender become a victim by taking everything they have).
58. Require stricter definitions of "blight" when used for the purposes of eminent domain and/or condemnation of property.

59. Ensure that the seizure of property by eminent domain is done to benefit the economic health, vitality and/or safety of the community and not for the benefit only of its takers.

Section III — CITIZENS UNITED:

Both the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights amending the U.S. Constitution apply to “people” and “men”. The terms “people” and “men” are commonly agreed to refer to human beings in plurality and NOT to entities such as corporations. Therefore, we concur that any rights and protections guaranteed in the Declaration of Independence and/or the Bill of Rights, including civil liberties specifically enumerated in the First Amendment, have absolutely no application to corporations or similar entities.

Therefore, we call for action to:

60. Amend the U.S. Constitution to overturn the flawed Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission – we believe that corporations are not people and that they can and should be regulated to ensure the rights of actual people.
61. The rights protected by the Constitution of the United States are the rights of natural persons only. Artificial entities, such as corporations, limited liability companies, and other entities, established by the laws of any State, the United States, or any foreign state shall have no rights under this Constitution and are subject to regulation by the People, through Federal, State, or local law. The privileges of artificial entities shall be determined by the People, through Federal, State, or local law, and shall not be construed to be inherent or inalienable. (A corporation is not a person and can be regulated.)
62. Federal, State and local government shall regulate, limit, or prohibit contributions and expenditures, including a candidate’s own contributions and expenditures, for the purpose of influencing in any way the election of any candidate for public office or any ballot measure. Federal, State and local government shall require that any permissible contributions and expenditures be publicly disclosed. The judiciary shall not construe the spending of money to influence elections to be speech under the First Amendment. (Money is not speech and can be regulated through campaign finance reform.)
63. Nothing contained in this amendment shall be construed to abridge the freedom of the press under the First Amendment.

Civil Rights: Diversity, Inclusion and Immigrant Rights:

Boulder County Democrats believe that diversity strengthens our nation and our communities and that every human being has the right to be treated with dignity. All persons residing in the United States deserve equal opportunity and protection under the law regardless of their race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status/opportunity, immigration status, economic status, disability, or age, in ALL situations including housing, employment, compensation, public services, education, transportation, public accommodations and health care.

Section I: Diversity and Inclusion:

Boulder County Democrats believe the civil liberties granted by our Constitution must be equally applied to all persons, discrimination must be prevented and, when injury is done, action must be taken to put an end to and compensate for such injustice. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our local, state and national elected officials to:

1. Ensure that our laws fully protect and promote equality, safety and respect for all aspects of life so that all people can live without fear, abuse or retaliation.
2. Establish and adequately fund law enforcement training programs to identify, prevent and end profiling and discrimination.
3. Provide adequate funding and training to enable the implementation of corrective action (up to and including dismissal and prevention of being hired in the same field somewhere else) when discrimination is identified.

Affirmative Action:

Due to past inequities, certain populations (including the LGBTQ community) may yet require special protection. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our local, state and national elected officials to:

4. Support and protect affirmative action policies and programs to enhance equal access to services, housing, education and employment.
5. Ensure equality in compensation for all people, no matter their race, ethnicity, religion, class, age, disability, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
6. Allow for and promote, through education and outreach programs, participation by people who reflect the changing demographics of communities, on all boards, commissions, task forces, committees and other governmental and policy-making bodies.
7. Increase funding through the private and public sector for group homes and other independent housing options, home-based services, sheltered workshops and mainstream employment programs to serve the disabled population.

Civil Unions and Marriage Equality:

With the recent Supreme Court decision relating to same sex marriage, family and relationship structures in the United States are changing. Any loving, supportive home can greatly benefit all involved, regardless of the genders of family members. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our local, state and national elected officials to:

8. Continue to support efforts to insure all couples are treated equally regarding marriages and that all appropriate state officials charged with issuing marriage licenses do so in accordance with the Supreme Court ruling and do not allow personal beliefs to prevent someone from exercising their legal rights regarding marriage.
9. Support policies that ensure recognition of all marriages across state borders.
10. Ensure all married couples have the same benefits, protections and responsibilities, including but not limited to insurance benefits to partners, legal custody of children, second-parent and co-parent adoption rights, employment benefits, property rights, pension coverage, inheritance rights and access to partners in emergency situations.

Rights of Native Peoples:

Indigenous people deserve to live freely as their ancestors did, as much as they desire to do so. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our local, state and national elected officials to:

11. Honor existing treaties with Native Americans.
12. Enact laws and policies that ensure the rights of indigenous peoples living on tribal lands to choose their own political, economic, social and cultural systems; to protect their environments; and to preserve their culture.
13. Encourage, foster and support models of sustainable energy, efficiency, agriculture, housing and economic development, that demonstrate Native wisdoms of right relationship with the earth, its peoples and the environment.
14. Provide for funding opportunities for education for all Native Americans from infancy through higher education, to support economic prosperity and social justice for Native peoples in a manner that is a hand up not a handout.

Section II: Immigrant Rights:

Boulder County Democrats honor and defend the basic human rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights to all persons in the United States regardless of citizenship status. As a nation of immigrants, we value the contributions that those from other lands and ethnic groups bring to our national economic, intellectual and cultural life. We believe that inclusion of hard-working immigrants is just as significant today as it has been throughout our history. We welcome those who would like to become legal residents or citizens of the United States. We oppose the institutionalization of undocumented immigrants as a marked and permanent underclass or to utilize fear and hatred against particular groups or communities, which result in the isolation of these groups. We honor and defend the basic human rights of every person in the United States, regardless of citizenship status. These rights include health

care, education, proper nutrition, family unity, protection under the law including labor law, protection from exploitation and entrapment, and the right to the pursuit of happiness.

Comprehensive Immigration Reform:

Boulder County Democrats recognize that the current immigration system is broken. A system must be developed that includes the full protection of U.S. labor law, protects against exploitation, values diversity, and provides the opportunity to earn citizenship. We urge the enactment of comprehensive reforms to immigration laws. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our local, state and national elected officials to:

15. Streamline visa applications, work permits and residency status, with the goal of substantially reducing waiting times while expanding nationality quotas so people don't wait decades to become U.S. citizens.
16. Create legal channels for future flows of immigrants to fill jobs in the United States for which they are qualified, when legal US residents are not available to fill those jobs. These channels must include portability to other authorized employers; appropriate living conditions; adherence to International Labor Organization standards, including the right to unionize and the right to earned living wages as well as safe and humane working conditions; and the right to travel between the United States and the immigrant's home country.
17. Create a fair and easily managed temporary worker program at the federal level which is workable for small businesses and which includes a path to citizenship for undocumented workers and their families.
18. Oppose the classification of "illegal immigrant" as a criminal offense.
19. Oppose the "Daily Quota" and the incarceration of undocumented immigrants who have committed no criminal offense. (Congress requires the Dept. of Homeland Security to hold 34,000 undocumented immigrants daily, delivering millions of dollars a year to private prison companies.)
20. Establish a moratorium on deportations of immigrant community members until enactment of immigration reform, with the exception of immigrants convicted of violent crimes.
21. Provide for easy and affordable registration, opportunity to work, and allow equal access to services provided by law, including the right to obtain an immigrant driver's license.
22. Encourage undocumented immigrants to report crimes by repealing the Clear Law Enforcement for Criminal Alien Removal (CLEAR) Act. Use U-visas (giving victims of certain crimes temporary work eligibility) and/or provide streamlined paths to citizenship for undocumented workers who provide information on illegal behavior by their employers, if said workers have not committed crimes themselves.
23. Oppose legislation that criminalized human acts of assistance to undocumented immigrants.
24. Prohibit further extensions of the border wall between the United States and Mexico, and prevent a wall from being built between US and Canada, and require that a primary duty of border patrol agents be for the provision of humanitarian aid (the US does not want to do what Germany did).

Affirmative Action for Immigrant Populations:

Boulder County Democrats oppose the denial of an immigrant's civil rights and attempts to limit or discourage civic engagement. We call for the application of basic rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights to all persons in the United States regardless of citizenship status. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call our local, state and national elected officials to:

25. Reverse the 1996 welfare reform law, which made most legal immigrants, including those of long-standing residency, ineligible for health care, welfare and other essential programs.
26. Encourage political participation and efforts to educate immigrant populations regarding political processes.
27. Increase federal funding for English language and civic education classes for all immigrants.
28. Support the Federal bipartisan DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) that provides citizenship for students who finish high school and complete two years of college or military service.
29. Include civil service as a qualifying option in the DREAM Act to prevent the DREAM Act from becoming a back-door military draft. (The DREAM ACT provides citizenship for students who finish high school and complete two years of college or military service.)
30. Extend student visas to allow people who are educated here sufficient time to find work in the United States after graduation.

Climate Change, Energy Policy and the Environment:

As the nation that consumes more fossil fuel per capita than any other, the United States also leads in the level of denial that climate change exists; these things must change. Ongoing human-caused environmental impacts, chief among them climate change, must be addressed immediately by every country, state, community and individual, as they threaten life as we know it in the long term.

To meet our commitments to future generations, legislation is required to guide us in reducing emissions and other environmental contamination from human activities and in mitigating the effects of climate change. As we approach the global temperature tipping point, we will see more water and food shortages, more increasingly powerful extreme weather events, and more wildfires.

As we transition to clean, sustainable production of energy, goods and services, as well as far greater efficiency and conservation, we must provide the energy our society needs while mitigating the damage that is irrefutably done through the use of fossil fuels. A crucially important first step is to develop coherent energy policies at local, state and national levels to limit environmental degradation and climate change.

Clean air, abundant clean water, productive oceans and healthy soils are imperative for healthy communities, a strong nation and the long-term survival of all life. Legislation and policies must protect our public and private lands, ecosystems, and the integrity of our food supply. Human activities like resource extraction and agriculture must include full remediation of environmental damage, enforced through the use of effective, independent monitoring and verification.

Section I

Carbon Emissions, Energy Development and Extraction Policy

Because global climate change is exacerbated by human activities that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, we support vastly increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. Related policies should promote economic activity, jobs, ingenuity and leadership; protect public health; and move toward long-term energy sustainability and independence.

Limiting Carbon Emissions

The key to addressing climate change is to reduce emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases as quickly, economically and efficiently as possible.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

1. Leadership and commitment to policies and incentives that significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, with the goal of 80%-90% reduction from current emission levels by 2050.
2. Taxes or other financial mechanisms applied to pollution, including carbon, which fully reflect related long-term costs to society.
3. Trade agreements that hold our trade partners accountable for their carbon emissions.
4. Aggressive national building standards for resource efficiency and minimal carbon emissions in the construction and operation of all residential, commercial, industrial and government

- buildings, including a requirement for Cool Roofing on all new construction and roof replacement projects.
5. Nationwide incentives, tax credits and stringent federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards that apply to all vehicles, to drive the development and use of low-emission vehicles.
 6. Expansion of public transit, including accessible rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit.
 7. Development and support of sustainably produced hydrogen fuel.

Energy Policies for a More Sustainable Energy Future

It is critically important to create legislation and policies that leverage public-private partnerships to drive research and development of innovative sustainable energy technologies as well as the financial tools to implement them.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for legislation that:

8. Establishes energy security as a national priority, aggressively funding energy efficiency strategies, renewable energy technologies, responsible biofuels and advances in [energy storage](#) capacity.
9. Funds urgent and continual upgrading of the US power grid, so it is capable of handling a variety of energy sources for enhanced efficiency, security, reliability and flexibility.
10. Decommissions unsafe [pressurized water design](#) nuclear reactors as soon as possible.
11. Eliminates all subsidies for fossil fuels and ethanol.
12. Requires all electric utilities to produce 50% of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025.
13. Replaces Colorado's investor-owned utilities with state-regulated, competitive energy markets of independent suppliers, coordinated through non-competing, regulated system operators that provide transmission, distribution and balancing services only.
14. Guarantees that citizens are permitted to participate in decision-making processes at the Colorado Public Utilities Commission.
15. Requires that Colorado utilities publish accurate [curtailment](#) data at least once a year.
16. Guarantees that renewable energy produced by consumers can be sold back to the local utility at the same price as energy that is purchased from the local utility.
17. Supports the retraining of any workers who lose their jobs as a result of the transition to greater energy efficiency and renewable energy.
18. Extends tax credits and other incentives to individual citizens for installation by professionals or by themselves of renewable energy technologies (such as solar panels, wind turbines, biogas digesters, etc.) on their property.

Mandate Responsible Oil and Gas Development

We have a responsibility to future generations to mitigate the damage being done to the earth, water, air, wildlife and people by fossil fuel extraction and use. Energy companies must be held fully responsible and accountable for all direct and indirect costs of fossil fuel development.

Oil and gas development must be guided by the precautionary principle - doing minimal to no harm and proceeding slowly or not at all when data is scarce. Good governance requires that sufficient, high quality data be gathered and independently evaluated.

Moratoria on hydraulic fracturing (fracking) do not impose a *taking*. Instead, they are an assertion that property ownership confers on the owner the responsibility to manage the property in a way that does not harm others. A drilling permit is not a permit to harm the environment or the wellbeing of others. Moratoria allow time for drilling companies, with independent oversight, to develop complete life-cycle processes that are nonpolluting and provide for recycling or reuse of all by-products from their operations. If a mineral estate can't be developed responsibly, it should not be developed. Government already shuts down irresponsible development of property in the surface estate; the mineral estate should be treated the same.

We assert that communities have the right to restrict activities that are likely to harm the health and wellbeing of their citizens by degrading the quality of air, water or land.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for Colorado state legislators to:

19. Place a referred amendment to the Colorado Constitution on the statewide ballot that gives all local governments the right, without preemption, to protect the health and wellbeing of their citizens, allowing them to issue regulations, moratoria and/or bans on fossil fuel extraction.
20. Support a statewide moratorium on the use of fracking until the risks to the public are scientifically and comprehensively assessed and regulated, with sufficient enforcement resources made available.
21. Place a referred amendment to the Colorado Constitution on the statewide ballot that recognizes and establishes that:
 - Air and water are shared resources that extend beyond the boundaries of our towns, cities and counties;
 - It is the fundamental right of all people to have clean air, clean water and a healthy environment; and
 - These rights carry at least the legal weight of property rights.

Legislation should be immediately developed and implemented that limits damage done by fossil fuel extraction. We believe such legislation must take a comprehensive, integrated approach to what constitutes responsible oil and gas development.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our local, state and national elected officials to:

22. Ensure that strict, comprehensive resource extraction regulations be developed and implemented as soon as possible.
23. Require that distances between extraction activities and water resources be established by independent and scientifically sound study for each extraction site and to strictly enforce adherence to these distances.
24. Require that minimum distances between extraction activities and inhabited areas be established and enforced for each extraction site by independent bodies, considering the short- and long-term health and safety of all people inhabiting or using that land.
25. Require that comprehensive data be collected at every extraction site and be made publicly available in a searchable database. This data should at least include the environmental conditions before extraction activities began; the amount and source of water used for fracking; chemical composition (including required tracers), by percentage, of fluids used; quantity and chemical composition of recycled water; volume of methane emissions; and frequency of spills and accidents.

26. Require follow-up monitoring of environmental and socioeconomic impacts of resource extraction by independent third parties.
27. Significantly increase and enforce penalties to discourage energy industry violations, considering all real costs of direct and indirect damage done.
28. Significantly increase royalty rates paid by drilling companies for oil and gas produced from state and federal lands, to be used for state and federal programs to collect baseline data, monitor ongoing environmental issues, adequately inspect extraction sites, enforce regulations, and fund remediation.
29. Ensure adequate funding to enable a sufficient number of inspectors to reasonably cover all extraction sites in Colorado at least once per year.
30. Establish significant fees and penalties for [flaring](#).
31. Establish strong regulations limiting activities that cause disruptions of the earth's crust, which result in earthquakes of any magnitude.
32. Maintain strong regulations that limit the maximum leakage of methane in natural gas production and transportation to no more than 2% of total production and require coal bed and landfill methane recapture.
33. Require energy companies to demonstrate their ability to pay for full remediation of potential damages resulting from their extraction and material transport activities.
34. Prohibit state and national energy industry inspectors from moving directly to jobs within the energy industry.

Section II ENVIRONMENT

Everyone shares the need for a clean, healthy, sustainable environment. Transparency is required in any activity that threatens environmental integrity, including on our public lands, to enable citizens to represent the [rights of nature](#); this is especially true for riparian systems and wetlands, which are primary sources of clean water for wildlife, ecosystems and humanity. Policies for rational and sustainable use of our land and agricultural resources are essential to maintaining the integrity of our ecosystems for the future.

Environmental Protection and Enforcement:

The environment we all share and depend upon to sustain us cannot protect itself. Active oversight of environmental threats is necessary to limit environmental harm by industry, property owners and individuals. We must protect the environment and enforce that protection before irreparable harm is done.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

35. Establishing independent environmental committees in the Colorado House and Senate.
36. Establishing an independent Department of the Environment to fully represent environmental concerns in Colorado, as surrounding states have already done.
37. Developing standards for accurately measuring the real direct and indirect costs of pollution, including human illness.
38. Developing and enforcing federal legislation requiring assessment, review, monitoring and resolution of environmental impacts from all activities related to resource extraction, transport and associated waste disposal or other alterations allowed in new and past leases of federal lands.

39. Establishing a legal requirement for proactive and full disclosure of environmental history that impacts any land to all current and future users of that land.
40. Fully enforcing existing and new requirements for disclosure, mitigation and elimination of toxic effects from activities that extend onto adjacent properties now and in the future.
41. Establishing strict limitations, especially during droughts, on significant industrial uses of fresh water, such as for fracking fluid, from municipal water supplies.
42. Regulations that prohibit resource extraction in flood plains.
43. Eliminating exemptions of resource extraction companies and processes from the:
 - [Clean Water Act](#),
 - [Safe Drinking Water Act](#),
 - [Clean Air Act](#),
 - [Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act](#),
 - [Resource Conservation and Recovery Act](#), and the
 - [Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act](#)
44. Negotiating a global initiative to regulate and strictly limit waste dumping in the oceans.

Human Impacts on Nature

The needs and rights of humanity do not trump the needs and rights of nature; indeed, our survival depends on the health of the natural world. The public has the right to be fully informed about, and the responsibility to participate in, decisions regarding managed growth and conserving of land and water.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

45. Developing, implementing and funding legislation and policies that ensure pollution reduction and resource conservation in private, professional and government activities.
46. Ensuring cooperation of local governments in regional planning for growth.
47. Enacting science-based environmental laws and policies that prioritize Colorado's natural environment and the preservation of public lands.
48. Fully funding strengthened enforcement of the Threatened and Endangered Species programs.
49. Ensuring that lands set aside for conservation continue to be conserved, regardless of economic pressures, particularly involving wetlands and other sensitive and ecologically valuable places.

Water, Agricultural Systems, Food:

Life is sustained by clean water and nourishing food; these resources must be kept available and affordable. Policy plays a critical role in guiding environmental protection and encouraging sustainable agricultural practices. We must aggressively investigate issues that pose a threat to biological integrity or to human health.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

50. Planning, legislation and policies that prioritize careful management of the limited water supplies shared by agriculture, industry, wildlife and communities.
51. Creating policies that balance the needs of urban development, open space, and recreation, with the need to support sustainable farming and ranching, a traditional base of Colorado's economy.

52. Expanding the legitimate use of local and state [conservation easement programs](#).
53. Funding independent scientific research into causes of human disease and dysfunction where correlation has been established between agricultural practices and adverse health outcomes.
54. Funding independent third-party research on the safety and long term impacts of the use of [genetically modified organisms](#) (GMOs) on the natural environment, farm workers and public health.
55. Imposing a moratorium on further authorization of GMO crops until potential hazards have been intensively and independently analyzed and mitigated.
56. Promoting a comprehensive approach to reducing factors which are negatively impacting pollinator health by:
 - Funding independent investigations into issues related to pollinator health and population collapse
 - Eliminating the use of neonicotinoids and other systemic pesticides
 - Supporting programs to enhance pollinator habitat on public and private lands
57. Minimizing the use of synthetic chemicals, hormones and antibiotics in agriculture.
58. Ensuring equitable government support for organic farming and other sustainable and humane agricultural practices.
59. Labeling every product with country of origin and the presence of GMOs and other potentially harmful ingredients.
60. Ensuring that food assistance and school nutrition programs include whole, healthy food.
61. Ending the use and support of food ingredients that significantly endanger public health, such as high-fructose corn syrup and partially hydrogenated fats, in all government food programs.
62. Reducing the use and support of food ingredients that result in significant collateral damage to the environment, such as palm oil, mass-produced monoculture foods, and GMOs, in all government food programs from production to distribution.
63. Supporting the emerging hemp industry in Colorado which will support small farmers while providing sustainable fuel, food and fiber.
64. Providing incentives to businesses and requiring government agencies to adopt and maintain proactive programs to reduce, reuse, recycle and compost.
65. Prohibiting the sale or planting of new high-water-consumption grass or grass seed in Colorado.

Shared Economic Prosperity: Finding the Right Balance for the Common Good

The entrepreneurial spirit of the American economic system has led to innovations and wealth generation with the potential to advance the standard of living for all American people. However, finding the right balance for the common good requires changes and regulation to ensure prosperity is shared equitably.

Section 1: Healthy Business, Employees and Consumers

Our government must ensure the advancement of the standard of living for all, dampen the severity and frequency of economic downturns, and provide services to those who are impacted by economic down turns or economic situations outside of their control.

Large Corporations, Wall Street and Banking

Ensuring economic prosperity for all requires that large corporations, Wall Street and banks be expected to contribute to the common good through rules, regulations and policies providing limits and guidance for their actions.

Therefore, we call upon our local, state and national elected officials to:

1. Require all “too big to fail” banks and financial institutions to be broken into smaller business units that would not be bailed out if they failed to perform.
2. Reduce the risk of financial crisis and the need for federal bailouts by reinstating the Glass-Steagall Act mandating the separation of commercial and investment banking and expanding the scope of the Act to include oversight and regulation of derivatives and to prohibit the inclusion of U.S. home mortgages in derivatives.
3. Ensure that regulatory agencies receive adequate funding and staffing to enforce all applicable regulatory laws.
4. Enforce securities regulations, financial regulations, and investment laws.
5. Vigorously prosecute corporations and corporate officers who violate the public trust or engage in fraud.
6. Vigorously prosecute corporations and corporate officers for illegally raiding private pension funds.

Small Business and Community Solutions

A healthy economy requires that the government foster a favorable environment for community solutions, cooperatives, small businesses and startups.

Therefore, we recommend the following actions:

7. To reduce income inequality, support the formation of cooperatives that are owned and controlled by employee-members.
8. Encourage and support the development of banks owned by the people of a state or a community as sources of affordable credit for local governments and businesses.
9. Increase funding and support of [Community Development Financial Institutions](#) (CDFIs) to promote economic development in urban and rural areas underserved by traditional financial institutions.
10. Support [Community Land Trusts](#) to increase access to and affordability of housing.
11. Increase funding for [Community Development Corporations](#) (CDCs) in neighborhoods with populations significantly below the area median income.

Employee Protection and Empowerment

Employees are the engine of our economy's productivity and deserve both healthy working conditions and sharing fairly in the prosperity they generate. Though productivity grew by 74% between 1973 and 2013, compensation for workers grew at a rate of only 9% during that same time (Economic Policy Institute). We recognize that the \$15 an hour minimum wage enacted in several metro areas is a significant improvement for many lower wage workers, but is still not a true living wage. Taking into account productivity increases and inflation since 1964, the minimum wage should be \$21.50 in 2015 dollars. To close the gap and empower employees we support the following policies:

12. **Increase the US minimum wage to a base living wage that accounts for the true costs of food, housing, utilities, health care, and transportation in US states having the lowest cost of living and which will be indexed for inflation. States and localities with higher costs of living are highly encouraged to set appropriate higher minimums. ****
(Reflects BOCO Dems \$15/Hour and Living Resolution passed 1/12/16)
13. Provide sufficient funding for full enforcement of all state and federal wage and safety laws.
14. **Prohibit states from barring localities of that state from setting a higher minimum wage for that locality than the state minimum wage.****
15. Enforce equal pay for equal work.
16. Enact laws with safeguards that protect all earned and vested retirement benefits of all workers and their families.
17. Incentivize employers to prefer full time employees over part time employees and contract workers by requiring that compensation (including benefits) is higher for part time employees and contractors than for full time employees.
18. Prohibit employers from accessing or considering the arrest or conviction record of a prospective or current employee or contractor in any employment decisions, except for selected positions such as child care workers and teachers.
19. Support worker's rights to organize and negotiate through collective bargaining for fair wages, safe and healthy work environment, education and training.
20. Support of union shops and opposition to any "right to work" legislation.
21. Support the principle that Colorado residents should receive the benefits of Colorado state construction and procurement contracts through the use of incentives whereby state contractors are encouraged to hire Colorado workers.
22. Support the payment of extended unemployment benefits during times of high unemployment
23. Support all workers having the right to unionize, including agricultural, domestic and public workers.
24. Oppose the use of consumer credit information for employment purposes
25. Repeal the Colorado Labor Peace Act as it negatively impacts the right of workers to exercise their collective bargaining rights.
26. Guarantee a safe and healthy workplace for all workers by adequately funding the Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), and similar agencies.
27. Colorado Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) should remain a defined benefit plan directed by a board elected by the membership.
28. Require employers to provide paid family and medical leave to all employees

Consumer Protection and Empowerment

In recent decades, consumer protections have been eroded, defunded or eliminated. For instance, the Bankruptcy Act of 2005 made it harder to file bankruptcy. Bankruptcy is important because it gives consumers a second chance to recover from overwhelming debt. Deregulation of the financial industry has resulted in predatory lending practices.

Therefore, we support:

29. Enacting a law banning predatory lending practices and requiring loans have transparent and reasonable terms.
30. Authorizing the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to bring suit on behalf of consumers.
31. Authorizing the courts to provide remedies for consumers including modification of the terms of the contract.
32. Enacting a national usury law that establishes an interest rate cap on all consumer loans and limits maximum late charges for late payments.
33. Helping consumers and businesses by enacting a law that forbids financial institutions from charging overdraft or insufficient funds penalty charges. Financial institutions are required to optimize transaction order processing on a daily basis to minimize the number of transactions with insufficient funds. Financial institutions are allowed to reject transactions for insufficient funds.
34. Repealing the 2005 changes to the bankruptcy laws that heavily favored corporations and business interests over those of consumers.
35. Requiring banks to legally provide accurate paper documentation of deed ownership before being allowed to proceed with the foreclosure process.
36. Enacting laws that grant judges in bankruptcy courts the authority to modify mortgages and/or granting a first-right-of-refusal repurchase option on primary residences for all people.
37. As part of the foreclosure process, providing pro-bono representation for individuals whose primary residence is the subject of foreclosure.
38. Requiring all mortgage information be removed from the privatized database systems of the financial industry and be publically maintained by the County Clerks and Recorders of Colorado.
39. Enacting legislation that prioritizes low income housing via public subsidies as well as developer incentives and regulations. An example would be adequately funding the National Housing Trust Fund Act which has been passed, but is unfunded.

Section II: International Trade

Unfettered free trade has resulted in multi-national corporations reaping huge profits while exploiting their work force and the environment. We must stand firmly for fair trade agreements that are negotiated transparently for the benefit of all people and mother earth. We believe fair trade agreements must provide at least a living wage and protect the earth.

Therefore, we ask legislators to:

40. Revitalize the American economy and create domestic jobs by taxing imported goods and services. Leveraging access to the US market via this tax, domestic business would be able to compete with foreign and offshored business that have an unfair advantage due to lower labor costs, minimal environmental regulations and/or lower tax rates. The revenues raised could be used, for example, as a progressive tax payer credit to offset the higher costs of goods and services subject to the tax, or for funding non-military federal budget items.

41. Require that trade agreements and treaties protect labor in member countries by prohibiting sweatshops.
42. Prohibit domestic or international investors from using trade courts to sue member countries for lost profits due to local laws (e.g. environmental protection laws, production rules,) that might interfere with maximum profitability.
43. Require a thorough open congressional review of existing trade pacts, such as NAFTA, WTO and CAFTA, before the U.S. initiates new trade agreements or treaties.
44. Require transparency during all preparations for future trade agreements to ensure that both the American people and the US Congress are kept well informed and those directly impacted by trade agreements have a voice in the process.
45. Prohibit the use of the Trade Promotion Authority (Fast Track) to push trade agreements through Congress without providing an opportunity to make amendments or changes to the text of a trade agreement.
46. Ensure all trade agreements, such as Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the US-EU Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement (TAFTA), are about trade only and not about rights and privileges of foreign and domestic corporations.
47. Ensure that all trade agreements are for the benefit of workers as well as corporations, and are in full alignment with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights set by the International Labor Organization.
48. Require that all trade agreements discourage movement of jobs and corporate operations from one trade agreement member country to another.
49. Require that all trade agreements include enforcement of child labor laws within member countries to protect the health and welfare of children.
50. Require that all trade agreements prohibit corporations from using their intellectual property rights to supersede the rights of people within a member nation to exercise their local customs and traditions, for example, traditional medicine.

Section II: Government: Revenue, Incentives, Services and Job Creation

We believe it is important that government provide services and infrastructure that facilitate a strong and just economic environment which creates opportunities for good jobs, an adequate safety net, and encourages innovation so we all can prosper.

Revenue

Adequate government revenues are needed to fund the public services and works that we all depend on. Some examples are our bridges, roads, libraries, police and fire protection, social services, medical insurance, our military, etc. Currently, the wealthy few in America have wealth equal to the bottom 150 million Americans. This is the worst wealth distribution of any industrial nation and is comparable to the wealth distribution in third world nations. A more progressive tax structure will remedy this. In addition, special tax breaks should be reassessed for effectiveness. The total impact of all tax breaks is \$1.24 trillion annually (as of 2015) which exceeds the total federal discretionary budget of \$1.14 trillion. This greatly reduces the funding available for economic prosperity, social justice, and economic justice programs.

Therefore, we support:

51. Ensuring the long term solvency of Social Security by eliminating the ceiling on income that is subject to the Social Security tax collected by the IRS.
52. Treating most sources of income as ordinary income – excluding the primary residence mortgage interest deduction and capital gains on sale of a primary residence. For example, eliminating special provisions that shelter income from taxation, such as, off shore tax shelters, tax shelters for corporations that move U.S. job offshore, reduced taxation on capital gains and dividends, and tax avoidance on estates.
53. Reintroducing a progressive income taxation structure similar to what was in place prior to 1980 to address the social injustice of severe wealth inequality.
54. Make property taxes progressive for owner occupied housing.

Incentives, Stimuli and Penalties

It is understood that our economic system functions best when governmental policies offer incentives and penalties to ensure vitality of the economy. Further, we need to ensure that stakeholders are rewarded for their efforts and investments, and that the economic rewards extend to the whole community.

Therefore, we support the following actions and policies:

55. Reinvigorate the American economy and rebuild our country's critical infrastructure , which is required to support an internationally competitive and enduring economic prosperity. Key areas of infrastructure that need immediate attention include: local water and utility systems, the national power grid system, schools, bridges, roads and highways, and mass transportation infrastructure at a national level.
56. Increase refundable tax credits to reduce education costs so that all have the ability to invest in their education.
57. Change the cost of living adjustments for Social Security and Social Security Disability Insurance benefits to add critical cost of living factors, such as housing and medical costs.

Job Creation and Sustainability

We believe that access to employment at a living wage with adequate benefits is a basic right for every individual and is essential to the health of our economy.

Therefore, we support the following;

58. The creation of jobs to address the need for sustainable energy sources to replace the diminishing supply of fossil fuels.
59. Promotion of economic prosperity through the use of tax incentives that reward private research and development investments that result in job creation.
60. Rewarding corporations for returning jobs to the U.S. that they had moved to offshore locations.
61. Rewarding U.S. corporations for reducing executive compensation and using the saved funds to create more jobs in the U.S. and/or to increase U.S. worker wages and benefits.
62. Rewarding and giving preference to American companies and corporations that use American labor and materials when fulfilling federal, state or local government purchases and contracts.

63. Restoring and increasing funding for lifelong learning and job training programs, providing workers with the valuable skills they need to fully participate in our 21st century economy. Verifying that employers do not misuse these funds to benefit themselves instead of the workers they were intended for.

Government Services

Institute laws, ordinances and policies to fulfill the basic human rights for Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness and ensure that all people have economic resources to access basic necessities of life, including suitable housing, food, healthcare, education, employment and a sustainable future.

Therefore, we support the following:

64. Enacting legislation to establish and fund domestic service corps, similar to the National Teachers Corps and AmeriCorps, as they provide job training and benefit the common good.
65. Supporting the continued federal government's operation of the U.S. Postal Service as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.
66. Supporting the proposal to replace usurious payday lenders with USPS provided basic banking services.

Military

Finding the right balance for economic prosperity, social justice, and economic justice level requires putting our military budget in balance within the Federal budget. As President Eisenhower warned us as a nation in his Farewell Address we need to be on guard against the military industrial complex. But we have failed to do this with the result our military expenditures have grown to 55% of the discretionary portion of the total annual federal budget, restricting the revenues available for domestic needs.

Therefore, we support:

67. Greatly reducing our reliance on private military contractors with the goal to totally eliminate their use by the U.S. Military.
68. Eliminating spending on military weapon systems that are no longer needed according to U.S. military command itself and authorizing spending only on effective weapons systems that are truly needed when balanced against domestic priorities.
69. Scaling back U.S. military bases, operations and engagements in ways that do not compromise our nation's safety and security.

Section IV: Social Justice

Social justice assigns rights and duties to the institutions of society, which enables people to receive the benefits and burdens of cooperation. This applies to education, health care, social security, labor rights, public services, income inequality, progressive taxation and regulation of markets, in order to fairly distribute wealth, income and opportunity as well as compensate for injustices committed in the past.

70. Therefore, we ask legislators to: Fund and disburse fair and just payments of all past, present, and future royalties due Native American beneficiaries for the use of their lands and resources.
71. Recognize the rights of Native Americans to fully control access (including banning access) to their land and natural resources.
72. Until there is a national living wage established in the U.S., adjust the Colorado state poverty-line threshold to a level that supports a reasonable quality of life for the state's working families and individuals.
73. Increasing funding and staffing for social services to ensure proper access to services for those in need of services.
74. Fully fund the Colorado Earned Income Tax Credit to improve conditions for those who meet the criteria for such support.
75. Repeal lifetime limits on public assistance
76. Support welfare reform that prioritizes the development of aids and skills that enable self-sufficiency.
77. Increase funding for subsidized legal protection to ensure protection of rights for low income citizens.
78. Enact legislation that creates a *graduated* reduction of public assistance when individual's incomes increase rather than an abrupt cutoff of benefits.
79. Subsidize access to affordable daycare for parents.
80. Develop cost effective alternatives to incarcerating people for petty drug-related and other non-violent offenses, such as the use of community monitoring, community service and restorative justice.
81. Improve the criminal justice system by increasing funding for both educational opportunities and mental health treatment so that inmates can return successfully to society when they have completed serving their sentence.
82. Restore economic justice for communities of color that have suffered years of racial job discrimination, red lining of mortgages and loans to colored neighborhoods, and discriminatory policing by funding full enforcement of anti-discrimination laws
83. Remove state prohibitions on rent controls.
84. Adopt and fully fund the Housing First approach to the homeless based on the concept that a homeless individual or household's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that other issues that may affect the household can and should be addressed once housing is obtained

Education:

Boulder County Democrats believe that the civic and economic vitality of the State of Colorado, our nation and the world depends on the skill level, creativity, problem-solving capacity and leadership abilities of its workforce. The highest quality of required public education for 21st century learners of all levels—from preschool through postsecondary vocational programs and college—must be accessible and affordable to all our eligible student populations. We believe local, state and federal governments share responsibility for meeting the needs of all children and must be transparent and accountable in the actions they take on behalf of our schools.

Boulder County Democrats believe:

- Adequate funding for all areas of education is a necessity and that a much more effective funding mechanism for public schools must be implemented.
- Locally elected school boards should be supported with the funding they need to provide a quality pre-k through 12 education, with funded state and federal evidence-based mandates.
- Every student should access to a high quality neighborhood school.
- Education funding must be allocated equitably across the state and must be sufficient to address the needs of at-risk, special needs students and English language learners (ELL). Funding must also provide for smaller class sizes.
- The availability of quality early childhood education programs, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, is essential to break the cycle of poverty and provide academic and economic opportunity for this and future generations.
- Vouchers (certificates issued by the government, which parents can apply toward tuition at a private or religious school rather than at the school to which their child is assigned) undermine the public education system.
- A well-rounded, balanced and fair assessment system, not dependent on standardized test scores, is essential for accurate evaluation of student achievement and teacher effectiveness.
- The highest quality of education is dependent on the quality of teachers, professors, and other individuals employed in the public education system. They should have salaries at least comparable to professionals in other industries with similar training, years of experience and levels of responsibility.
- The right to associate is fundamental to our democracy and that all public education employees should have a right to participate in a union if they desire.
- All Colorado students, pre-K through post-secondary, deserve a safe and healthy environment in their school buildings and grounds, including the absence of any concealed firearms in the possession of all people present other than members of the police or hired security guards.
- Decisions affecting public education should be made at the appropriate local level of government—school boards for most issues; private corporate interest should not have undue influence on decisions regarding curricula, educational resources, and standardized assessments.

Ballot Measures

Boulder County Democrats call upon Party leaders, elected officials, and Democrats across Colorado to call for and bring to the electorate statewide Constitutional amendment ballot measures to:

1. Repeal the language from Article 9, Section 2 and Section 11 that require completely inadequate provisions for the education of all Colorado children. Replace it with adequate provision by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain high quality education and for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of higher learning and other public education programs that the needs of the people may require.
2. Repeal Article 10, Section 20, the so-called Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR).
3. Repeal Article 10, Section 3, the so-called Gallagher Amendment.

Funding:

Boulder County Democrats believe the State of Colorado must fully fund the highest quality of education for all children.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for:

4. The full funding of Amendment 23, consistent with voter intent of increasing K-12 funding, to replace over \$1 billion in cuts to K-12 education and allow school districts to rebuild and restore programs, and begin to fill teaching positions that were eliminated. (Approved by the BCDP County Assembly, March 22, 2104.)
5. The full funding of a thorough and uniform education with public monies to public schools that are locally controlled.
6. Efforts to build an adequate tax base for both pre K-12 and higher education, to achieve a high quality education for all students.
7. Public funding of transportation to support quality education for all students.
8. Targeted funding to support learning for specific populations, including at-risk, special needs and ELL students and their families.
9. Funding and advancement of the best teaching methods and environments to meet the needs of an increasing number of students with autism and other health challenges.
10. Funding and infrastructure to provide technology to every school in Colorado.
11. Capital investment to improve educational facilities throughout the state of Colorado.
12. Public funding for public schools only.
13. Opposition to the use of vouchers and tuition tax credits for private or religious schools.

Inclusivity and Diversity:

In a democracy, everyone, regardless of socioeconomic background, should have access to a quality education, from preschool through high school and post-secondary vocational programs or college. We call for an education system, which is inclusive of our diverse populations.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

14. Policies and programs that elevate and honor all students, including students from diverse populations and those with special needs.
15. School district policies that support hiring teachers, paraprofessionals, staff and administrators of diverse backgrounds to reflect the student population.
16. The identification of disparities in educational achievement and programs and research-based intervention strategies to address any disparities and inequities.
17. Increased availability of dual-immersion (two-way bilingual) programs.
18. Increased professional development for all school district employees to assist them in promoting equity and diversity in schools.

Student Curriculum, Instruction, and Evaluation:

A rich, balanced curriculum acknowledges the importance of educating the whole child, and provides effective instruction and meaningful evaluation.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

19. A curriculum that meets the needs of diverse learning styles, with multiple measurements of achievement and multiple pathways to success.
20. A curriculum that prepares students with skills of critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, innovation, and collaboration.
21. A comprehensive curriculum in all public schools, which recognizes the equal importance of all subjects including the arts, music, physical education, healthy living, foreign language, civics, etc.
22. Fact-based science and history curricula, presented without bias.
23. Appropriate use of technology to enhance teaching and learning.
24. A curriculum that strives for authentic teaching and learning as opposed to teaching to a standardized test.
25. Preschool and universal full-day kindergarten.
26. Vocational, career, and technical training and post-secondary programs for high school students.
27. Experienced educators working in low-performing, high-needs schools.
28. Comprehensive sex education classes.

Post-secondary Education:

Boulder County Democrats support access to affordable quality public higher education for all state residents.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

29. Funding on par with or above the national average for higher education with the goal of free post-secondary education for in-state students.
30. The DREAM Act (giving children of undocumented adults a path to legal residency and citizenship).
31. Increasing financial aid, merit scholarships and need-based grants for Colorado students.
32. Vocational training, especially in green energy and information technologies, as well as other career skills.
33. Prioritizing adequate salaries and benefits for adjunct professors and part-time instructors.

34. Access to free mental health services for all post-secondary students and staff.

Educator Rights:

Boulder County Democrats believe that good working conditions, adequate compensation, fair evaluation, due process, and academic freedom for teaching professionals are essential to quality education.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

- 35. Educator compensation competitive with those in private industry with similar educational credentials.
- 36. Fair evaluation of educators using multiple measurements, without emphasizing high-stakes standardized test results.
- 37. Respect for academic freedom and first amendment rights for educators.
- 38. Funding for capital construction and renovation that provide a safe, supportive, and healthy teaching and working environment.
- 39. Associations of educators that protect due process rights.

Health Care

Boulder County Democrats believe that the health of our residents is essential to the security and prosperity of our Nation and serves the common good. We understand that there are many social determinants of an individual's health, including financial resources, environmental quality, education, and safety regulations. We strongly support more robust funding for public health services which include public health promotion, disease prevention programs and advancement of public health science. These services are in the frontlines in the fight against disease and poor health conditions.

The costs of health care keep rising. The United States continues to spend two to three times more than other industrial nations, but scores lower on measures of health care quality including access, equity and efficiency of care. According to the World Health Organization, based on 2013 data, the U.S. ranked 34th, tied with Cuba, Costa Rica, Nauru and Columbia in life expectancy worldwide. According to the CDC, the U.S. has the highest infant mortality of 27 other wealthy countries. Each year, 45,000 preventable deaths occur in the US due to lack of health insurance. Large numbers of Americans face bankruptcy because of health care debt. The Institute of Medicine estimates that the US wastes \$750 billion each year in health care costs. Furthermore, profiteering in health care is in direct conflict with health care needs.

We can and must do better. It is vital to our residents and economy that the United States establishes an affordable, efficient, comprehensive health care system for all.

Boulder County Democrats believe that:

- The Patient Protection and Affordability Care Act is a hard won step toward regulating the insurance industry and increasing health insurance coverage for many Coloradans.
- Colorado owes it to her residents to continue the reform work until each resident has necessary health care and is treated respectfully; each business is released from health insurance burdens; each provider is respected as a professional; and each taxpayer is assured that our health care money is used wisely.

Section I: Strengthening Health Care and Insurance Reform

Boulder County Democrats call upon our local, state and national governments to support the reforms enacted by the Patient Protection and Affordability Care Act (PPACA) and to strengthen these reforms.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats support:

1. A national, universal health care system, guaranteeing quality, affordable and comprehensive health care for all through a not-for-profit single-payer financed system.

Until a Single Payer system is enacted on a national level, we support:

2. Efforts to provide for the long-term solvency and adequate funding of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security Disability Insurance.
3. Legalization and funding for death with dignity (compassionate choices).
4. Efforts to ensure that quality health care will always be affordable and accessible for all U.S. residents.
5. Full funding and implementation of PPACA.

6. Efforts to use our money wisely by reducing fraud; eliminating duplication and unnecessary care; lowering the costs of administration, pharmaceutical products and medical supplies; while supporting local innovative efforts to provide high quality, cost effective health care to all.
7. Adequate funding to Medicare and Medicaid health care providers to promote their participation in these programs.
8. Giving all health care payers, including Medicare, permission to negotiate prescription drug costs directly with the pharmaceutical industry including sources outside the U.S.
9. Strong opposition to privatizing Medicare
10. Expanding Medicare Supplemental to replace Medicare Advantage.
11. A health care system that is fiscally responsible, transparent and accountable to the public.
12. Strong cost containment measures that reward positive health outcomes instead of quantity of services provided, lower administrative costs and detect and reduce fraud.
13. A health care system that emphasizes high quality, comprehensive, coordinated care, such as Patient Centered Medical Homes and home care, utilize integrated services and to allow patients to access all of their medical records and limit the access of others.
14. Increasing the use of electronic communications and record-keeping in order to provide efficient, coordinated, comprehensive health care services with less redundancy and with lower administrative costs.
15. Expanding broadband tele-medical services.
16. Incentivizing medical practitioners to provide services in underserved areas.
17. Eliminate gender, racial and ethnic disparities in health care delivery.
18. Increasing availability of home and community-based hospice services.
19. Coverage by insurance of the full range of women's reproductive health care, essential to wellness and prevention of health complications.
20. Efforts to ensure that medical decisions are voluntary and kept between patients and their health care providers and that they are not subject to government, insurance or third party interference.
21. A health care system that provides choice of health care providers; ensures continuity of care, and in addition to wellness, primary care, preventive care, public health and disease prevention, includes robust mental health, dental, vision and hearing services.
22. Public policies that are based on scientifically sound research.
23. Continued federal funding for stem cell research.
24. Removal of federal roadblocks for the funding of research on the medical uses of marijuana.
25. Increased funding and support for medical education, including tuition, internship and residency opportunities, to encourage doctors to practice medicine according to their preference and not just economic pressures.
26. Increased funding and support for training in complementary and alternative medicine, including tuition.
27. Efforts to ensure adequate treatment resources by allowing, without restriction by physicians or insurers, all health professionals (e.g. nurse practitioners, advanced practice nurses, nurse midwives, psychiatric nurses and complementary and alternative practitioners) to practice to the full extent of their education and training and to be compensated appropriately.
28. Education about disease and immunization to promote public health.
29. Identifying inmates that would be more appropriately served in our mental health system than in our prison system.

30. Eliminate tax exempt status for non-profit hospitals having excessively high administrative costs.
31. Limiting profiteering in hospital care that is in direct conflict with customers' health care needs.
32. Firearm safety is a health issue.
33. An emphasis on women's health care, including research, which ensures equality for both men and women.
34. Investment in providing for the health needs for our aging population.

Section II: Colorado Health Care and Reform

Colorado must provide affordable, high quality, comprehensive healthcare for all residents independent of employment.

Therefore, we support:

35. A universal health care system, such as the proposed ColoradoCare initiative that operates fully for the benefit of Colorado residents; determined by local needs; with health care premium money remaining in Colorado; governed democratically by members (all Colorado residents) with the interests of the members rather than outside interests being served.

Until such a unified system is in operation, we support:

36. Efforts to strengthen and support the Affordable Care Act and the Colorado Health Benefit Exchange Insurance (Connect for Health Colorado) to provide an open and transparent method of finding and comparing affordable insurance coverage for individuals and small businesses.
37. State legislation to promote price transparency by requiring all health care providers, hospitals and insurance companies to provide disclosure of pricing for different procedures.

Healthy Democracy: Election Reform, Media Reform, and Government Ethics & Accountability:

Boulder County Democrats believe that a healthy democracy requires a citizenry that is involved and engaged on an ongoing basis. To remain engaged, a citizenry must know that its voice is heard, and not drowned out by those with the money, influence and power to make their voices louder.

To ensure an open and accountable government, voters must be factually informed on the issues. To ensure the highest caliber of leadership, voters must have access to information that enables them to draw clear and valid distinctions amongst candidates seeking to govern. Media must serve as an unbiased observer, free of the domination, manipulation and control of those who seek to influence a nation and its people for their own profit. Media competition must be ensured and consolidation limited.

At a time when public confidence in government is perhaps at its lowest in our history, it is imperative that health and trust be restored to our democracy or we risk losing it all together.

Government must be in alignment with the will of the people. Leaders must be held accountable when they fail that will. The people must be informed by facts, not deception. One voice must equal one vote that is counted. Our government must be of, for and by the people, not corporations, and speech must in truth be free.

The citizenry must know that its vote is counted honestly and fairly. Election laws must ensure equal representation, achieved through fair and impartial redistricting. The right of all citizens to vote must be protected, regardless of race or minority status. All eligible to vote must have full, convenient, easily accessible, and unfettered access to the means to vote. Election procedures must ensure that elections are open, fraud-free, easily verified and incontrovertible in their results.

Section I: Election Reform:

While Boulder County Democrats commend the State of Colorado for the new laws passed and signed, we believe every American must have the right to vote, to vote with ease and without obstruction and to know that their vote was cast fairly in a fair election.

A. Voting Rights and Voting Registration:

We must ensure that all eligible Americans have the right to vote and that their right to vote is protected. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for our Party leaders and state and national representatives to support:

1. National legislation or a constitutional amendment guaranteeing that every citizen of the United States who is of legal voting age shall have the fundamental right to vote with ease, without restriction and with no threat of disenfranchisement in any public election held in the jurisdiction in which the citizen resides, and that all such votes shall be counted.

2. Changes and enforcement of the Voting Rights Act to require that all states uphold federal voting rights standards and obtain federal preclearance before making any changes to election laws.
3. Full access to the election process for homeless persons without a street address, once a voting district is declared.
4. Full access to the election process for persons who were formerly incarcerated, regardless of criminal status (Note: In four states, disenfranchisement ends after incarceration and parole is complete: California, Colorado, Connecticut and New York.).
5. Full access to the election process for persons who now are now incarcerated, regardless of criminal status
6. Voter registration services available when applying for public assistance.
7. Prohibitions in state and federal elections of purging otherwise qualified voters from the voting rolls.

B. Election Procedures:

For a truly representative and democratic system of governing, we believe all elections must be of, for and by the people of this nation, conducted without the undue sway of money, influence and power. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for our party leaders and state and national representatives to support:

8. Boulder County Democrats support a United States Constitutional amendment that would firmly establish that corporations are not persons and are not entitled to first amendment protections, and that the spending of money to influence elections is not protected free speech (see Civil Liberties: Citizens United). Mandatory public funding for all campaigns that demonstrates a baseline level of support.
9. Legislation requiring the full disclosure of all sources of funding for all political advertising and activities.
10. Legislation prohibiting employer guidance, intimidation or interference in matters of employee voting preferences, community activism or political affiliation.
11. Colorado joining the Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by Popular Vote. (Note: Colorado has 9 electoral votes. Ten jurisdictions, plus the District of Columbia, have already joined, possessing 165 electoral votes, or 30.7% of the 270 Electoral College votes, and 60.1% of the 270 votes needed for the compact to go into effect.)
12. Prohibiting the gerrymandering of Congressional districts (the political manipulation or rigging of district lines to favor one or another political party). For example, have truly independent commissions who redraw district maps that are equal in population, are compact and contiguous, are compliant with the US Constitution and the Voting Rights Act, show respect for communities of interest, incorporate visible geographic features (including city, town and county boundaries as well as undivided census tracts) and which result in competitive districts.
13. Instant runoff voting in local, state elections (ranked choice). (A voting system in which voters rank candidates in order of preference. If no candidate receives a majority of first choices, the candidate with the fewest number of votes is eliminated, and ballots cast for

that candidate are redistributed to the remaining candidates according to the voters' indicated preferences. This process is repeated until one candidate obtains a majority.)

14. Establish policies in Colorado for citizen initiatives requiring that only unpaid volunteers may gather signatures on petitions for placing an initiative on the general election ballot. If unpaid volunteers do become mandatory, reduce the number of signatures required for getting on the ballot.
15. Increase the number of signatures required for citizen initiatives that call for state constitutional amendments to at least 5% more than that required for statutory initiatives. When a citizen initiative for a constitutional amendment is on a ballot require that a super majority vote for adoption. (Note: the requirements for citizen initiatives for statues and constitution amendments are now the same.)

Section II: Media Reform:

A healthy democracy requires an informed public and the protection of free speech. Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call for federal laws that:

16. Require licensed broadcast, cable and satellite media to provide a minimal level of public service broadcasting.
17. Protect the constitutional rights and provide for the publicly funded defense of media and their whistle-blower sources when disclosing to the public classified information about government abuses of power, illegal or unconstitutional acts.
18. Require that broadcast licensees provide, at no cost, substantial airtime that is equal in both quality and quantity to all candidates who have achieved a threshold of public favor of at least 5%.
19. Maintain the independence of public broadcasting by significantly increasing its public funding.
20. Encourage media competition, local ownership and independent media, and ensure that a diversity of viewpoints be represented.
21. Ensure journalistic freedom in reporting war news, with the exception of risks to military personnel or national security.
22. Preserve Net Neutrality with guarantees of access to all content and applications for Internet service providers and customers, regardless of the source, and without favoring or blocking particular products or websites.
23. Provide free fair and open public access television as a freedom of speech forum for all US residents on an equal and non-commercial basis.

Section III: Government Ethics & Accountability:

Boulder County Democrats affirm that the primary duty of our elected federal representatives is to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States. Maintaining the checks and balances between the Executive, Congressional and Judicial branches of government is essential. Therefore, to ensure a responsive and accountable government and a government that is of, for and by the people, Boulder County Democrats call for:

24. Checks on the excessive use of internal legal opinions, which presume to allow the Executive Branch to diverge from the original intention of congressional legislation.
25. A ban keeping former members of Congress or former senior Congressional staff from lobbying or being in any way involved in lobbying Congress or any government agency for two years after termination of association with Congress. (Note: Currently the cooling off period is two years for former senators and one year for former congressional aids and House members.
26. Full disclosure of sources of income for all paid lobbyists.
27. Requiring congressional representatives to maintain logs of constituent and lobbyist interaction, which are to be publicly available.
28. Providing constituents with greater, fair and equal access to elected officials, including the use of both private and publicly provided remote electronic communication, prohibiting any discrimination.
29. Changes in the Senate rules to prohibit one senator or a minority of senators from filibustering or holding legislation or approval of federal appointments hostage for an indefinite period of time.
30. Changes in the rules of the House to restore the secrecy of the signing of a discharge petition, which would allow a majority of the House to force a bill out of committee and take it directly to the floor for a vote.
31. Requiring every bill coming out from committee be given an up or down vote within a set number of days
32. Complete transparency in the budgeting and appropriating of all Federal funds.
33. The total prohibition of the use of a government shutdown by Congressional leaders of either Party for political purposes.
34. Holding Congress accountable by deducting from their salaries wages earned for the duration of the shutdown, should a budget not be passed.
35. The transfer of responsibility for setting the debt-limit from Congress to the Treasury, so it cannot be used against the President. The debt-limit is about payment of bills already incurred and should not be used to threaten US credibility.
36. Prohibiting a congressional member on a committee from voting on legislation involving things from which they will reap a direct financial benefit. (eg. Insider trading, farm, gas and oil and other industry subsidies and incentives.

Trust in our government and our democracy has been severely eroded in this new century as falsehoods have been spread to start unwarranted wars, torture has been condoned or ferreted away to foreign shores, the privacy of our own citizens has been invaded, and facts have been ignored or concealed regarding government involvement in and response to national crises. Therefore, to restore transparency and confidence in our institutions and to honor the American ideal that "no one is above the law," we call for:

37. Review procedures and ensure for unbiased, just, efficient and accountable congressional investigations.
38. Congressional investigations and challenges to the decisions and opinions of the executive branch, whenever 40% of the House, in an up or down vote, agrees to it.

International Relations and Foreign Policy:

Boulder County Democrats believe our foreign policy should reflect our highest principles of freedom, justice for all, equality, human dignity, the right of a people for self-determination, the rule of international law, and the principles stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We support engaging with the people of the world as partners and contributing to the peace and security of the world as a free, open and democratic society. We believe that our nation can work positively together with other international institutions to assist in the resolution of international conflict without imposing its will. We believe that keeping citizens safe from terrorism must not contribute to the loss of our own U.S. civil liberties at home or undermine international agreements affirming the fundamental rights of all human beings.

Extremism can best be fought by giving hope, eliminating injustice, lifting the blinders of ignorance, and promoting mutual respect that leaves no room for demonizing those from other cultures or for intervening in their right to self-determination.

The reasons for war must be transparent and initiated only for the protection of our own U.S. citizenry or the rights of others. It must be a just cause and must only be used as a last resort. We vigorously hold that our right to disagree with and protest against our government's decision to go to war, in no way undermines our support for our men and women in uniform and their families.

Section I: Promoting Peace and Preventing War:

Boulder County Democrats are mindful of the blessings of democracy as well as our consequent obligation to contribute toward international cooperation, peace, and prosperity for all.

Therefore, we call upon our Congressional leaders and the President of the United States to:

1. Vigorously pursue non-violent conflict resolution and foreign policies based on diplomatic engagement.
2. Base US foreign policy on the American values of freedom and democracy.
3. Attack the global threat of international terrorism by understanding and eradicating its root causes of: poverty and political powerlessness.
4. Take a leadership role in the development of economically just international policies and trade agreements, and support economic opportunity for developing nations, honor basic human and civil rights, protect the rights of workers to a safe work environment, and preserve the well-being of a people and their environment.
5. Provide immediate and adequate assistance to end the effects of famine, natural disasters and climate change.
6. Prepare for and address the needs of climate change refugees, and refugees from war-torn regions, and those devastated by ethnic cleansing, political, and economic upheaval.
7. Create a Department of Peace to focus energy and resources toward working with countries on a global level to establish peace.
8. Pay the debt the United States government owes to the United Nations for past dues and peacekeeping expenses.
9. The U.S. should sign and adhere to the Anti Land-Mine, Anti Cluster-Bomb, and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaties and all treaties for the non-militarization of space.
10. Work energetically toward achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.
11. Ensure that profit never is a motivation for war.
12. Use only the appropriate military force and only as a last resort after all diplomatic

options have failed.

13. Update the current War Powers Act to preclude any type of invasion onto foreign soils without a formal approval by Congress.
14. Respect the constitutional right of U.S. citizens to protest our government's decision to go to war.
15. Reduce the number of U.S. military bases abroad.

Section II: Protecting International Human and Civil Rights:

International law imposes certain duties upon nations with respect to the treatment of individuals. It is a violation of international law to treat a non-citizen in a manner that does not satisfy the international standards of justice.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our Congressional leaders and the President of the United States to:

16. Maintain strict adherence to international agreements, including the Geneva Conventions, The Nuremberg Principles, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International War Crimes Tribunal that affirm the fundamental rights of all human beings.
17. Ensure full United States participation in the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, and ratification of the Law of the Sea.
18. Use effective and appropriate technologies and methods to protect our nation that do not impinge on our civil liberties or those of people in other nations.
19. Limit the use of drone and airstrikes to a legally declared war or to counter international terrorism.
20. Prohibit the use of torture or 'enhanced interrogation techniques' under all circumstances, on our own or foreign soil in compliance with International Law.
21. Close as soon as possible the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay and put an end to the practice of indefinite detention without a trial.
22. Treat terrorists as criminals to be dealt with by appropriate national and international systems of criminal justice.
23. Support the Child Soldiers Prevention Act which prohibits conscription of children.
24. Take a leadership role in international efforts to end slavery and trafficking.
25. Work vigorously to ensure equal rights for women worldwide.
26. Support foreign aid which makes available all forms of birth control and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.
27. Provide asylum to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender immigrants who face persecution from their home country's government.
28. Stop forced medical experimentation around the world.

Section III: Resolving International Conflict:

Where there is conflict within and amongst nations, including between our own and other nations, every effort must be made to bring those conflicts to a just and timely end.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call upon our Congressional leaders and the President of the United States to

29. Support elimination of long-term commitments of the U.S. military in regions where our national security is not threatened.
30. Oppose military engagement, arms aid or sales to bolster the positions of dictators, to support a military coup or to promote regime change, not supported by the people of a nation.
31. Support popular movements toward democracy with all possible diplomatic actions, and

avoid military intervention.

32. Support continued normalization of relations with Cuba.
33. Strongly support the United Nation's initiatives to put an end to all forms of ethnic cleansing, genocide, mass rape and apartheid.
34. Provide funding and support of internationally established peacekeeping forces and humanitarian assistance to the citizens of nations in civil war and ethnic conflict.

Conflict in the Middle East:

The United States should use its influence and work in concert with international institutions to help resolve the multiple conflicts in the Middle East by fostering democratic processes, economic stability, environmental safety, human rights, and adherence to international law.

Therefore, Boulder County Democrats call our leaders to:

35. Prevent any pre-emptive invasion or attack or military action against any country in the Middle East.
36. Use all U.S. diplomatic resources available to avoid U.S. direct military involvement in Syria.
37. Work for the continuation of the safe and responsible withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Afghanistan.
38. Support multilateral international coordination of political, military, financial, and humanitarian efforts to promote regional stability throughout the Middle East.
39. Recognize and meet the United States' obligation to reduce the suffering of the Iraqi and Afghan people.
40. Prohibit war profiteering in any reconstructive efforts in Iraq or Afghanistan.
41. Commit to using dialogue and diplomacy to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace among all the peoples of the Middle East.
42. Work for a just and equitable solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through diplomatic efforts.
43. Make sure that all agreements for ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict include the end of the use of violence against each other and the acceptance of the other's right to exist.
44. In any two-state solution, support a fair division of territory that provides each with an economically and socially viable geography, a sovereign state with full internal control, and with specific secure boarder. Such a solution should resolve all issues between the parties, including but not limited to: a) Removal of or remainder in place of specific Israeli settlements; b) A commitment by both parties to expand economic, educational, scientific, environmental and cultural cooperation with each other.
45. Strongly support free, fair and transparent elections and civil rights to ensure for full participation and protection of all citizens in their respective nations.
46. Until such time as a peace agreement is accepted by both Israel and Palestine, support respect for international law regarding human rights and the Geneva conventions.