

Platform
of the
Democratic Party of Delaware
2005

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I. Preamble

“Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fiber of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough.”

– President Franklin D. Roosevelt

Delaware Democrats believe in the collective strength of all of our citizens. A government that utilizes this strength to guarantee rights and services is more influential and effective than leaving people to fend for themselves.

We, the Democratic Party of Delaware, dedicate ourselves to maintaining and improving our leadership in government. From election districts with community involvement to the statewide campaigns, Delaware Democrats shall recruit and organize. By continuing to encourage participation of all Delawareans in our party, by supporting our candidates and by promoting personal freedom, economic and educational opportunity, efficient government and justice for all, our roots will grow and our leaders will succeed.

II. Families, Children and Senior Citizens

The Delaware Democratic Party believes that there are many types of families and all should be supported. A strong family is the backbone to a healthy society. Government should support parents, encouraging them to raise their children with health, education, prosperity and an understanding of the diversity of society. We support:

- Preserving and protecting Social Security as a public system for current recipients and future generations,
- Providing affordable and accessible health care and health insurance,
- Standing firmly for a woman's right to choose,
- Higher pay and tougher standards for child care workers,
- Improving Delaware's foster care and adoption system,
- Expanding and encouraging adult education and job training opportunities,
- Reducing the number of children living in poverty,
- Expanding the number of welfare to work programs,
- Assisting families who are caring for relatives with chronic illness,
- Providing State assistance for senior citizens and disabled persons to enhance self sufficiency,
- Assuring the highest level of professional care for senior citizens, to ensure quality of life,
- Continuing efforts to advocate that the federal government expand Medicare Part D prescription benefits, and
- Supporting the expansion of biomedical research for the public's health.

III. Education

The Delaware Democratic Party believes that every child must have a quality education to compete successfully in tomorrow's job market. Knowledge is the key to individual achievement and economic prosperity. A diverse and highly educated workforce in turn leads to economic growth in Delaware. To remain economically competitive, Delaware must always strive to be on the cutting edge of education. We support:

- Continuing to refine student, parent, teacher, school and district accountability,
- Expanding early childhood education and supporting full day kindergarten,

- Engaging business, government and community leaders with higher and secondary institutions,
- Making a college education as fundamental as a high school education, and
- Providing clean, safe and drug free schools.

IV. A Livable Delaware

Delaware Democrats recognize that we must manage our environment in a responsible and balanced manner in order to protect Delaware for future generations, while preserving the property rights, businesses and industries that depend on our state's land. We support:

- Protecting and improving the quality of Delaware's land, water and air,
- Preserving Delaware's open space and agricultural lands with State acquisition and land grants,
- Directing growth to community and developing areas where State, county and local governments are prepared and infrastructure investment is planned or where Brownfield redevelopment can occur, and
- Supporting business and industries that require and uphold a healthy environment, farming, hunting, fishing and tourism.

V. Economic Development

Our manufacturing, biotechnology, banking, automotive, tourism and agricultural industries continue to strengthen Delaware's economy, employing thousands while generating valued revenue for the State. The Delaware Democratic Party supports:

- Fortifying Delaware's leadership standing among the 50 states,
- Identifying opportunities to sustain and strengthen Delaware's economy,
- Encouraging economic diversity by developing and supporting small, minority and women owned businesses, and
- Ensuring that state leaders are effectively engaged with Delaware's top employers, tourism and financial industries.

VI. Organized Labor

As Democrats we believe we must support Delaware's working families. Delaware Democrats recognize the essential role that organized labor has played in bringing a measure of fairness and safety to Delaware's workforce. Organized labor is necessary for the rights of workers to organize and collectively bargain, leading to a strong economy. We support:

- Encouraging individuals united in trade or workforce to organize,
- Protecting organized labor's ability to engage people in the political process,
- Collective bargaining for all state employees,
- Increasing minimum wage,
- Promoting healthy working conditions, and
- Encouraging an open line of communication between labor leaders and leaders of government.

VII. Public Safety and Homeland Security

The Delaware Democratic Party believes that public safety and homeland security is a responsibility of government at all levels, federal, state, county and municipalities. Public safety and crime fighting should be addressed through a community-based approach, sharing resources working with the State, County and City governments. We support:

- Focusing on crime prevention, not just punishment, allocating resources to substance abuse and family counseling,
- Eliminating racial profiling and other random targeting methods,
- Protecting Delaware's citizens from violence and terrorism, and
- Reasonable and responsible gun laws.

VIII. Military/Veterans

Delawareans have a long and noble tradition of serving our nation and our state in the United States military. The men and women of the military, including the Delaware Army and Air National Guard, are dedicated to defending freedom and we honor their service and sacrifice. Delaware's over 80,000 veterans can be proud of their service and we will continue to support programs aimed at bettering their lives. Their efforts support

national and global democracy and protect our American rights and values. We support:

- Moving forward with the construction of a Veterans' Home,
- Dover's Air Force Base and the vital role it plays in the defense of our nation and the economy of our state. We oppose any attempt to close down this important military facility, and
- Supporting the families of those deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan and other areas around the world.

IX. Civil Rights and Diversity

The Delaware Democratic Party is proud of its long-standing support of equal rights, securing individual freedoms and protecting against discrimination. Civil rights are fundamental to the Delaware Democratic Party. We support:

- Participation by all, regardless of age, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or economic background to help our society flourish,
- Enhanced punishment for criminals convicted of crimes motivated by hate and discrimination,
- Legislation that provides equal opportunity and rights for all, and
- Striving toward a diverse workforce that reflects the Delaware Democratic Party.

X. Good Government

The Delaware Democratic Party believes every Delawarean should be confident in the stewardship of government at all levels. We support:

- Government that is well managed, accountable, efficient and responsive,
- Sound fiscal practices,
- Ideas and contributions of all Delawareans, and
- Redistricting, campaign finance and public officials' compensation should be handled in an open manner, thus strengthening the trust Delaware citizens put in our government leaders.