

PLATFORM OF THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

PREAMBLE

The Westchester County Democratic Committee (“WCDC”) is dedicated to principles and policies designed to improve the lives of our residents. We believe government has a role in creating a free and equal society where everyone can enjoy the promises made in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

To achieve this we must:

- Protect voting rights
- Preserve civil and human rights
- Build a stronger and fairer economy
- Provide a world class education in every zip code
- Achieve universal, affordable, quality health care
- Increase trust in the criminal justice system
- Combat climate and environmental crisis

PROTECTING VOTING RIGHTS

Nothing is more fundamental to democracy than voting. The ability of all citizens to elect their leaders is the very definition of the democratic system. The WCDC stands squarely behind the main underpinning of a vital democracy: free, fair and unimpeded access to the ballot.

This involves universally available voter registration, mail-in voting and early voting as well as campaign finance reforms, including disclosure of donations by super PACs, LLC’s, and “dark money” 501(c)4 groups.

PRESERVING CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Our nation must strive to maintain the rights of every individual and to ensure that everyone is treated equally before the law. Further, an equitable society must strive to protect the personal dignity and rights of its citizens. The WCDC supports policies and programs designed to help all realize the “inalienable rights” promised in the Declaration of Independence.

The WCDC strongly endorses an end to discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religious practice, language, gender, age, sexual

orientation, gender identity, or ability status. The WCDC rejects quid pro quo, nepotism, cronyism or any form of corruption by public officials. It also supports legislation and policies to end sexual assault and domestic abuse as well as the right of everyone to make personal health and reproductive care decisions.

BUILDING A STRONGER, FAIRER ECONOMY

Income and wealth inequality in America are intensifying. While some enjoy tremendous wealth, others live in poverty. Closing the gap between rich and poor is one of the most critical challenges we face. The WCDC believes everyone should have the means to acquire the essentials of life and the opportunity to share in the nation's bounty.

The WCDC urges a concerted effort to increase the amount of affordable housing. It also backs a living minimum wage, pay equality, child care, and eradicating homelessness, support of labor unions, fairness in the workplace and a more equitable tax code.

PROVIDING A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION IN EVERY ZIP CODE

Quality, equitable public education at every level is necessary for every child to reach their full potential and for the well-being of American society. An educated populace is crucial to the survival of the republic. The WCDC believes every school must educate all children, regardless of where they live or their economic status.

The WCDC supports universal year-long early childhood education, free tuition for two years at a community college or public vocational training for all Westchester high school graduates. In addition, just as books were made available to students in the 20th century, computers and other technology should be available to all students in the 21st century.

ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL, AFFORDABLE, QUALITY HEALTH CARE

Health care is a human right. Providing healthcare to all Americans has long been a goal of the Democratic party. Everyone should have the security of knowing they will not be financially ruined by health care needs and that they will be protected in their old age from the devastation of sickness and accident.

To this end, the WCDC supports equal access to affordable, quality and accessible physical and mental healthcare for all, including young people and veterans, as well as affordable prescription drugs, substance use treatment and services, and affordable long term care for all.

INCREASING TRUST IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

The United States has the highest prison population per capita in the world. For a nation that aspires to be the greatest democracy, and the land of opportunity, this must be addressed. The WCDC believes in a criminal justice system that will heal our society and rebuild our communities.

To accomplish this, the WCDC supports steps to reduce the epidemic of gun violence, including making gun manufacturers face legal liability, increasing “buy back” programs, banning assault weapons, and requiring background checks for all gun sales. In addition, building a more just society includes fairer drug laws, and providing enhanced services to our prison population as well as implementing plans to reform policing.

COMBATING CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS

The natural beauty in our county is iconic and precious, but in danger. Our rich environmental systems are threatened by climate change and overdevelopment. The WCDC believes everyone in Westchester has the right to clean air and water, sustainable infrastructure, and a life free from exposure to toxic chemicals, pollution, or the threat of exposure to nuclear waste.

The WCDC believes in continuing to modernize sewage treatment centers and infrastructure as well as enhancing flood mitigation and emergency preparedness. The WCDC advocates for more green public buildings and vehicles, retaining open spaces and reducing the county’s carbon footprint.