

## A Call To Action (2016)

The Green Platform presents an eco-social analysis and vision for our country. In contrast to the major political parties that create their platforms through back-room deals by insiders and power brokers, we have created a grassroots process that invites submissions from every local Green Party and every Green individual. Through democratic process we arrive at a final draft to present for approval. The Green Platform is an evolving document, a living work-in-progress that expresses our commitment to creating wise and enduring change in specific policies and in the political process itself. The Green Party is committed to values-based politics, as expressed in our Ten Key Values. These values guide us in countering and changing a system that extols exploitation, unsustainable consumption, and destructive competition.

The US government is proving incapable of governing or working with other nations to address current and long-term problems in a time of multiple global crises. The United States is locked in a vicious circle, in which it has become increasingly clear that the 'bipartisan' political duopoly will drift further rightward at an increasing pace without a true opposition party as a counterweight, as both corporate parties seek to better serve their 1% masters.

In this century, it is imperative that we find ways to make systemic changes. It is our responsibility to rebuild the political culture of the United States in order to stop wars of aggression, short-sighted ecological destruction, erosion of our rights, and policies that perpetuate social and economic injustice. In other words, we must fundamentally change our society's broken political system.

Throughout American history, independent parties outside the two-party power establishment have been responsible for introducing urgently-needed changes, whether the parties themselves won electoral success (like the anti-slavery Republican Party in the mid-1800s) or not. The long list of reforms introduced by these parties includes abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, the eight-hour workday, workers' rights and protections, and civil rights for all African-Americans. Who will give voice on the electoral stage to the important ideas of the 21st century?

The Green Party is an established national party, having laid a foundation for candidates to run for public office at all levels, from local to national. Greens have succeeded at the onerous task of achieving ballot access in many states, and have steadily overcome obstacles put in place by Democratic and Republican party officials to hinder citizens from exercising their right to run for office. In contrast to Democrats and Republicans, all Green candidates pledge not to accept corporate money for their campaigns.

At the heart of the voters' rebellion is our right as voters to choose whichever candidates best represent our own views and desires, without being told year after year that we have no choice aside from bad and worse.

Now is the time to build a bridge from the world we have to the better world we know is possible.

Now is the time to grow a sustainable political force to work for grassroots democracy, nonviolence, social justice, and ecological wisdom.

Now is the time to discard failed ideologies and political structures, and join together with the flourishing global grassroots Green movement to tackle real problems with real solutions.

If not us, who? If not now, when? We are the ones we have been waiting for. Join us!

## **Preamble (2016)**

Never has our country faced as many challenges and crises as we do now. Levels of federal revenue are the lowest they have been since 1950 because of tax cuts and breaks for the very rich and for corporations. Government agencies charged with safeguarding public health and safety are operating with slashed budgets that paralyze their efforts. Jobs are being permanently relocated outside the country, while social and educational programs are being gutted. Our food, water, air, and soil are increasingly found to bear toxins and debilitating pollution. Every single level of government—local, county, state, and federal—is operating in the red, running up crushing amounts of debt. Many of our allies and former friends around the world are disgusted with our imperialist foreign policy, militarism, and arrogant corporate behavior. Realizing that our actions will be judged by future generations, we ask how we can draw on the best of our traditions, calling forth a spirit of ingenuity and citizen participation to achieve a free, democratic, just, and responsible society, one that actively responds to the crucial ecological challenges of our time, rather than denying them.

We submit a bold vision of our country's future, a Platform on which we stand:

- Our Ten Key Values as a guide to a politics of vision and action,
- A creative, pragmatic plan for a prospering sustainable economy, and
- A call to restore and protect a healthy, diverse environment and to cultivate a sense of community at all levels, from the local to the planetary.

We propose a vision of our common good that is advanced through an independent politics free from the control of corporations and big money, and through a democratic structure and process that empowers and reaches across lines of division to bring together our combined strengths as a people.

We, the Green Party, see our political and economic progress, and our individual lives, within the context of an evolving, dynamic world.

As in nature, where adaptation and diversity provide key strategies through which life flourishes, a successful political strategy is one that is diverse, adaptable to changing needs, and strong and resilient in its core values:

- Participatory Democracy, rooted in community practice at the grassroots level and informing every level, from the local to the international.
- Social Justice and Equal Opportunity emphasizing personal and social responsibility, accountability, and an informing ethic of Nonviolence.
- Ecological and Economic Sustainability, balancing the interests of a regulated market economy and community-based economics with effective care for the Great Economy in which we are embedded: the ecosystems of the Earth.

The Green Party Platform seeks to identify the most crucial problems facing our country and offers ideas for responsible action to solve them. Looking to the future with hope and optimism, we believe we can truly correct the course of reckless, destructive governance that has allowed and encouraged the degradation of our ecological life-support systems, gutted our economy, and strained the social fabric to the point of causing material hardship for millions of Americans. Our common destiny brings us together across our nation and around the globe. We act in service to our children and the future generations of all our relations in the Earth community. We act in service to the future we are creating today.

## **Ten Key Values (2016)**

### **1. Grassroots Democracy**

All human beings must be allowed a say in decisions that affect their lives; no one should be subject to the will of another. We work to improve public participation in every aspect of government and seek to ensure that our public representatives are fully accountable to the people who elect them. We also work to create new types of political organizations that expand the process of participatory democracy by directly including citizens in decision-making.

### **2. Social Justice and Equal Opportunity**

As a matter of right, all persons must have the opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. We must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society at large, any discrimination by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, religion, or physical or mental ability that denies fair treatment and equal justice under the law.

### **3. Ecological Wisdom**

Human societies must function with the understanding that we are part of nature, not separate from nature. We must maintain an ecological balance and live within the ecological and resource limits of our communities and our planet. We support a sustainable society that utilizes resources in such a way that future generations will benefit and not suffer from the practices of our generation. To this end we must practice agriculture that replenishes the soil, move to an energy-efficient economy, and live in ways that respect the integrity of natural systems.

### **4. Non-Violence**

It is essential that we develop effective alternatives to society's current patterns of violence. We will work to demilitarize and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, without being naive about the intentions of other governments. We recognize the need for self-defense and the defense of others who are in danger. We promote non-violent methods to oppose practices and policies with which we disagree, and will guide our actions toward lasting personal, community and global peace.

### **5. Decentralization**

Centralization of wealth and power contributes to social and economic injustice, environmental destruction, and militarization. We seek a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions away from a system controlled by and mostly benefiting the powerful few, to a democratic, less bureaucratic system. Decision-making should, as much as possible, remain at the individual and local level, while assuring that civil rights are protected for all.

### **6. Community Based Economics**

We support redesigning our work structures to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy. We support developing new economic activities and institutions that allow us to use technology in ways that are humane, freeing, ecological, and responsive and accountable to communities. We support establishing a form of basic economic security open to all. We call for moving beyond the narrow "job ethic" to new definitions of "work," "jobs" and "income" in a cooperative and democratic economy. We support restructuring our patterns of income distribution to reflect the wealth created by those outside the formal monetary economy – those who take responsibility for parenting, housekeeping, home gardens, community volunteer work, and the like. We support restricting the size and concentrated power of corporations without discouraging superior efficiency or technological innovation.

### **7. Feminism and Gender Equity**

We have inherited a social system based on male domination of politics and economics. We call for the replacement of the cultural ethics of domination and control with

cooperative ways of interacting that respect differences of opinion and gender. Human values such as gender equity, interpersonal responsibility, and honesty must be developed with moral conscience. We recognize that the processes for determining our decisions and actions are just as important as achieving the outcomes we want.

## **8. Respect for Diversity**

We believe it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across the human spectrum. We believe that the many diverse elements of society should be reflected in our organizations and decision-making bodies, and we support the leadership of people who have been traditionally closed out of leadership roles. We encourage respect for all life forms, and increased attention to the preservation of biodiversity.

## **9. Personal and Global Responsibility**

We encourage individuals to act to improve their personal wellbeing and, at the same time, to enhance ecological balance and social harmony. We seek to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of the planet.

## **10. Future Focus And Sustainability**

Our actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals. We seek to protect valuable natural resources, safely disposing of or "unmaking" all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival. We must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions. We must make the quality of all lives, rather than open-ended economic growth, the focus of future thinking and policy.

## **I. Democracy (2016)**

Our nation was born as the first great experiment in modern democracy. We seek to rescue that heritage from the erosion of citizen participation. Moreover, we seek to dissolve the grip of the ideology, intoned by big-money interests for more than twenty years, that government is intrinsically undesirable and destructive of liberty and that elected officials should rightly "starve the beast" by slashing all spending on social program, in the name of freedom. We challenge that tactic by calling on all Americans to think deeply about the meaning of government of the people, by the people, and for the people. In a democracy, individuals come together to form structures of governance that protect and advance the common good. We the citizens are the government, and we the citizens can direct it to fulfill its finest goals and purposes. Our citizens must not permit usurpation of their authority by acts of individuals and government agencies that isolate or insulate government from their oversight and control. We, the People, have a

responsibility to participate in self-government through all the means that our Constitution provides.

Citizens of a democracy must have the information and ability to determine the actions of their government. Vast concentrations of wealth and power that have occurred in recent years are inherently undemocratic. The deregulation of corporate activity and the decentralization and underfunding of the regulatory structures that remain—accompanied by the centralizing of big money—has been a disaster for our country. The true owners of the public lands, pension funds, and the public airwaves are the American people, who today have little or no control over their pooled assets or their commonwealth.

The power of civic action is an antidote to the corporate control of so much of our lawmaking and regulating. The pervasive abuse imposed by corporate power increasingly undermines our democracy, but the Green Party seeks to rekindle the democratic flame. As voting citizens, taxpayers, workers, consumers, and stakeholders, we unite to exercise our rights and, as Thomas Jefferson urged, to counteract the "excesses of the moneyed interests." Toward this end, we consider serious reform of campaign funding to be essential, as well as curbs on the influence of corporations on lawmakers and regulatory agencies.

The Green Party considers American democracy to be an ongoing, unfolding project that is dynamic and creative in nature. We are committed to the strengthening of our civil society, including the many mediating institutions at the community level that have always characterized our democracy. We seek to heal the alienation and apathy that has been cultivated in the citizenry by the power brokers of the status quo. Righteous anger about the crippling of our democracy is rising in the land, and the Greens offer constructive alternatives. In addition, we seek to repair the plummeting opinion of the United States in the international community resulting from our arrogant, narcissistic foreign policy of recent years. A growing and grave imbalance between the citizens of this country and the interests that extract power from the citizens is an imminent danger to our security and national and global social stability. We strongly feel that our country should view itself as a member of the community of nations... not above it. The United States could well play a leadership role in that community but only if we become committed to an eco-social vision of peace, national self-determination, and international cooperation.

Our goal is to become an important political force in this country, and to present candidates for election at every level of government.

## **A. Political Reform**

### **OUR POSITION**

Greens will crack down on political corruption and strengthen the voice of the people at all levels of government.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to influence the governmental decisions that affect them. But the defining characteristics of modern politics in the United States are a corrupt campaign finance system that enables corporate and wealthy elites to purchase political outcomes; and an abundance of anti-democratic electoral, ballot access and debate rules designed to minimize participation and choice.

To achieve genuine citizen participation, citizens must share in the power of governing. Greens seek to bring vibrant grassroots democracy to every part of the United States.

Greens seek to repair U.S. electoral system, from how elections are financed, to conducting them in more fair and representative ways, to ensuring accountability and transparency on all levels of government. In particular, Greens believe that the U.S. winner-take-all voting system is fundamentally flawed, resulting in low voter participation, little choice or competition in countless elections, and far too few women and minorities in elected office.

The failure to fulfill the promise of democracy leaves millions of people in our country too discouraged to vote and others who chose to vote seemingly trapped among false and limited choices. A system that promotes full and fair representation would draw millions of people in the United States into civic life and could revive democracy in this country.

## **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

### **1. Electoral reform**

- a. Enact proportional representation voting systems for legislative seats on municipal, county, state and federal levels. Proportional representation systems provide that people are represented in the proportion their views are held in society and are based on dividing seats proportionally within multi-seat districts, compared to the standard U.S. single-seat, winner-take all districts. Forms of proportional representation include choice voting (candidate-based), party list (party-based) and mixed member voting (combines proportional representation with district representation).
- b. Enact Instant Run-off Voting (IRV) for chief executive offices like mayor, governor and president and other single-seat elections. Under IRV, voters can rank candidates in their order of preference (1,2,3, etc.) IRV ensures that the eventual winner has majority support and allows voters to express their preferences knowing that supporting their favorite candidate will not inadvertently help their least favored candidate. IRV thus frees voters from being forced to choose between the lesser of two evils, and saves money by eliminating unnecessary run-off elections.
- c. Provide full public financing of federal, state and local elections, including free and equal radio and television time on the public airwaves for all ballot-qualified candidates and parties.

- d. Prohibit corporations from spending to influence elections, preferably by constitutional amendment abolishing granting corporations constitutional rights guaranteed to natural persons, or as a condition of receipt of a corporate charter by federal chartering of corporations.
- e. Eliminate all ballot access laws and rules that discriminate against smaller parties and independents, and otherwise place undue burden on the right of citizens to run for office.
- f. Abolish the Electoral College and provide for the direct national election of the president by Instant Runoff Voting. As a step in that direction, support National Popular Vote legislation which would guarantee the Presidency to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states (and the District of Columbia), which would take effect only when enacted, in identical form, by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes—that is, enough electoral votes to elect a President (270 of 538).
- g. Create a new publicly-funded People's Commission on Presidential Debates, and open its presidential debates to all candidates who appear on at least as many ballots as would represent a majority of the Electoral College and who raise enough funds to otherwise qualify for general election public financing. Any candidate who refuses to participate in such debates would lose general election public financing for their candidacy. Amend federal law to remove the non-profit tax exemption status that allows corporations to fund the existing Commission on Presidential Debates and other such exclusive privately controlled debate entities.
- h. Amend the Federal Election Campaign Act to change the percentage of the presidential popular vote required for a new party's candidate to receive first time General Election public funding from 5% in the previous General Election to 1%; and change the percentage of the presidential popular vote required for a new party to receive public presidential convention funding from 5% for its candidate in the previous general election to 1%.
- i. Include the option to vote for a binding None of the Above (NOTA) on all party primary and general election ballots.
- j. Support the right to initiative, referendum and recall at all levels of government. Enact signature gathering standards that empower volunteer collection efforts and financial disclosure requirements that identify the sources of funding behind paid signature efforts.
- k. Enact a national "right to vote" law or constitutional amendment to guarantee universal, automatic, permanent voter registration, along with fail-safe voting procedures, so that eligible voters whose names are not on the voter rolls or whose information is out-of-date can correct the rolls and vote on the same day.

- l. Enact statehood for the District of Columbia. Ensure that residents of the District of Columbia have the same rights and representation as all other U.S. citizens.
- m. Restore full citizenship rights to felons upon completion of their sentence, including the right to vote and to run for elected office. Enable greater enfranchisement of overseas voters.
- n. Support strong enforcement of the Federal Voting Rights Act and, where applicable, state voting rights acts like the California Voting Rights Act.
- o. Make Election Day a national holiday and/or have weekend elections.
- p. Amend the U.S. Constitution to require that all vacancies in the U.S. Senate be filled by election rather than appointment.

## **2. Reducing corruption**

- a. Develop publicly-owned, open source voting equipment and deploy it across the nation to ensure high national standards, performance, transparency and accountability; use verifiable paper ballots; and institute mandatory automatic random precinct recounts to ensure a high level of accuracy in election results.
- b. Establish guarantees that every citizen's vote counts, and that all U.S. voting systems—including electronic ones—are verifiable, transparent and accurate.
- c. Establish a National Elections Commission with the mandate to establish minimum national election standards and uniformity, partner with state and local election officials to ensure pre-election and post-election accountability for their election plans, require nonpartisan election boards, and depoliticize and professionalize election administration across the United States.
- d. Establish independent and transparent non-partisan redistricting processes to stop partisan gerrymandering and protect minority rights and representation.
- e. Increase the number of polling places, and increase the pay for poll workers.
- f. Strengthen "sunshine laws" to provide citizens with all necessary information and access to their political system.
- g. Ensure that all important federal, state and local government documents are on the Internet, especially texts of bills, searchable databases of voting records, draft committee and conference reports, and court decisions.
- h. Reinvigorate the independent investigative agencies, such as the General Accounting Office and the inspectors general.

- i. In addition to allowing members of Congress to send mail to their constituents for free, letters from citizens to their members of Congress shall also be free.
- j. Enact tough new federal anti-bribery and gratuity laws to stop corporations and the wealthy from purchasing government action, and vigorously enforce of anti-corruption laws by the Justice Department.
- k. Prohibit members of Congress, Governors, state legislators and their staffs from accepting for their own personal benefit any gifts of any amount from lobbyists or the general public.
- l. Require outside counsel to investigate ethics complaints against members of Congress, and toughen punishments within the congressional ethics processes for corruption, abuse of power and other wrongdoing.
- m. Replace the Federal Election Commission with a vigorous watchdog empowered to enforce federal campaign finance laws.
- n. Expand revolving-door lobbying "cooling off" periods for members of Congress and their top staff to at least two years.
- o. Allow any member of Congress to require a floor vote on any congressional earmark, to stop wasteful spending.
- p. Support the ability of cities to establish civilian police review boards to increase understanding between community members and police officers, provide a public forum to air concerns on policy matters and to ensure public oversight and accountability of their local police department.

## **B. Community**

Community is the basic unit of green politics because it is personal, value-oriented, and small enough for each member to have an impact. Community involvement is a foundation for public policy.

Social diversity is the wellspring of community life where old and young, rich and poor, and people of all races and beliefs can interact individually and learn to care for each other, and to understand and cooperate. We emphasize a return to local, face-to-face relationships that humans can understand and care about. Among Greens, our guiding principle is to think globally and act locally. Community needs recognize a diversity of issues, and local control recognizes a variety of approaches to solving problems, ones that tend to be bottom-up not top-down. Green politics does not place its faith in paternalistic big government. Instead,

Greens believe face-to-face interactions are essential to productive and meaningful lives for all citizens.

The Green vision includes building communities that nurture families, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; creating cities and towns that educate children, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources; building local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime; and motivating citizens to participate in making decisions.

The Green vision calls for a global community of communities that recognize our immense diversity, respect our personal worth, and share a global perspective. We call for an approach to politics that acknowledges our endangered planet and habitat. Our politics responds to global crises with a new way of seeing our shared international security.

We will conceive a new era of international cooperation and communication that nurtures cultural diversity, recognizes the interconnectedness between communities, and promotes opportunities for cultural exchange and assistance.

We call for increased public transportation, convenient playgrounds and parks for all sections of cities and small towns, and funding to encourage diverse neighborhoods. [See section C. Transportation in chapter III] We support a rich milieu of art, culture, and significant (yet modestly funded) programs such as the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities. [See section E. Education and the Arts in chapter II]

## **1. Families and Children**

- a. We call for social policies to focus on protecting families. The young— our citizens of tomorrow— are increasingly at risk. Programs must ensure that children, who are among the most vulnerable members of society, receive basic nutritional, educational, and medical necessities. The Green Party supports and seeks to expand Head Start and Pre- and neo-natal programs. A Children's Agenda should be put in place to focus attention and concerted action on the future that is our children. [See section A.8. Youth Rights in chapter II]
- b. A universal, federally funded childcare program for pre-school and young schoolchildren should be developed.
- c. Family assistance such as the earned income tax credit, available to working poor families in which the parent supports and lives with the children, should be maintained and increased to offset regressive payroll taxes and growing inequalities in American society. [See section E. True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness in chapter IV]
- d. A living family wage is vital to the social health of communities. [See section D. Livable Income in chapter IV]
- e. The actuarial protection of social security is essential to the well-being of our seniors, and maintenance of the system's integrity is an essential part of a healthy community. We oppose privatization of social security, call for the program to remain under the

aegis of the Federal Government, and seek to expand its effectiveness. [See section M. National Debt in chapter IV]

- f. We support the leading-edge work of non-profit public interest groups and those individuals breaking out of "careerism" to pursue non-traditional careers in public service.

## **2. Alternative Community Service**

- a. We must create new opportunities for citizens to serve their communities through non-military community service. Alternative community service to the military should be encouraged.
- b. We advocate the formation of a Civilian Conservation Corps, with national leadership and state and local affiliates, to spearhead efforts to work on the tasks of environmental education, restoration of damaged habitats, reforestation, and cleaning up polluted waterways. Providing land and resource management skills will challenge young people while encouraging social responsibility.

## **C. Free Speech and Media Reform**

### **OUR POSITION**

Independent, critical media are essential to an informed and healthy democracy.

Citizens must have ready access to news and information to make responsible informed choices as voters and to carry out their other duties of citizenship.

The United States' original communications policy was the 1st Amendment. Freedom of the press was guaranteed in the Constitution because an exchange of ideas and an unfettered debate were considered essential components of a democratic society. Today, however, government policy is designed less to enhance public deliberation than to boost the profitability of media corporations.

Our media laws and rules promote the formation of huge media conglomerates while discouraging competing voices. As a result, the mainstream media is increasingly cozy with the economic and political elites whom they should be investigating. Mergers in the news industry have accelerated, further limiting the spectrum of viewpoints in the mass media. With U.S. media overwhelmingly owned by for-profit conglomerates and supported by corporate advertisers, investigative journalism is in an alarming decline.

In response, Greens will strengthen citizens' influence over the broadcast media, break up the dominant media conglomerates and boost the number of community and non-profit news outlets, all to fortify the media's crucial watchdog function and to help create a more diverse and lively exchange of ideas in America.

Since governments too often have an interest in controlling the flow of information, we must constantly guard against official censorship. In our society however, large corporations are a far more common source of censorship than governments. Media outlets kill stories because they undermine corporate interests; advertisers use their financial clout to squelch negative reports; powerful businesses employ the threat of expensive lawsuits to discourage legitimate investigations. The most frequent form of censorship is self-censorship: journalists deciding not to pursue certain stories that they know will be unpopular with the advertisers.

## **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

1. Return ownership and control of the electromagnetic spectrum to the public. We urge the public to reclaim the airwaves. The privatization of the broadcast airwaves, one of our most important taxpayer assets, has caused serious deformations of our politics and culture. End the privatization of broadcast frequencies and reserve them for the creation of new not-for-profit community broadcasters around the country and for broadband and wifi networks owned and operated by cities, counties and towns which want to deliver this vital tool to their people at reasonable cost.
2. Enact tough new anti-trust laws for the media, carve up the big media conglomerates, and follow up with vigorous anti-trust enforcement.
3. End commercial broadcasters' free licensed use of the public airwaves. Require market-priced leasing of any commercial use of the electromagnetic spectrum. Revenues derived from these license fees should be used to fund the operation of community media. Tax electronic advertising to fund democratic media outlets.
4. Reinstate and strengthen the Fairness Doctrine, to require that holders of broadcast licenses present controversial issues of public importance in an equitable and balanced manner.
5. Establish substantial public interest obligations for broadcasters and hold them accountable, and revoke licenses from outlets that fail to satisfy these obligations.
6. Support Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) Access Television to ensure that citizens and community organizations have the opportunity to create and present their own programming on cable television.
7. Expand the role of community radio, by expanding the licensing of new non-commercial low power FM radio stations.
8. Promote greater opportunity for women and minority ownership of media outlets.
9. Greens welcome the continuing and evolving potential of the Internet to build communities, educate, inform, and promote free speech and artistic expression.

- a. Provide broadband Internet access for all residents of this country, so that access to information is a right, not a commodity.
  - b. We call for the Federal Communications Commission to consistently classify all Internet service providers, regardless of the type of service (cable, dial-up, satellite, etc.), as telecommunications services.
  - c. We call for the specific classification of all Internet service providers as common carriers as used in Title II of the Communications Act.
  - d. We support all efforts to achieve net neutrality. Internet users should be able to access any lawful web content they choose and use any applications they choose, without restrictions or limitations imposed by their Internet service provider or government, except for restrictions that exist to prevent spam e-mail, viruses, and similar content that will harm the provider's network or internet access devices.
10. Ensure free and equal airtime for all ballot-qualified political candidates and parties on radio and television networks and stations.
  11. Provide public funding for independent nonprofit broadcasters' to ensure high-quality news and cultural programming with the widest possible range of viewpoints.
  12. Prohibit commercial advertising targeted to children less than 12 years old, as well as advertising in public places such as schools, parks, and government buildings.
  13. Oppose censorship in the arts, media, press and on the Internet.
  14. Reform the Federal Communications Commission so that it is responsive and accountable to the public at large, not just to lobbyists and commercial interests.
  15. Repeal the Telecommunications Act of 1996.
  16. Reduce mailing costs for non-profit and independent magazines and journals, and eliminate them for those that receive less than 20% of their revenues from advertising.
  17. Promote policies to expand investigative reporting on federal, state and local issues.
  18. Promote policies to encourage the people of the United States to watch less television, and instead to spend time with their families, friends and neighbors, and to engage in myriad other constructive, artistic or healthful pursuits.
  19. Create a publicly-controlled "Audience Network" empowered to take airtime from commercial television and radio stations, to broadcast a variety of non-commercial cultural, political, entertainment, scientific or other high-quality programs.

## **D. Foreign Policy**

At the start of a new century, we stand poised between the geopolitical conflict of East versus West; a future marked by the aftermath of the catastrophic events of September 11, 2001; the dangers of global terrorism; the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan followed by the unprovoked invasion and occupation of Iraq; the escalation of conflict in the Middle East; and the continued research and development of nuclear weapons and the stockpiling of bio-chemical weapons.

In the area of trade, third- and fourth-world economies and resources are being ravaged and our own economy and job security undermined by global corporatization, which concentrates greater power in the hands of fewer interests who are unaccountable to the vast majority of the world's people.

As we overcome continued conflicts and violence, we realize the difficulties inherent in encouraging democracy and of advancing the cause of peace. We face a more complex set of challenges in how our nation defines its national security. Greens support sustainable development and social and economic justice across the globe. Reducing militarism and reliance on arms policies is the key to progress toward collective security.

### **1. Foreign Policy – Peace and Disarmament**

- a. As one of the initiators and primary authors of the United Nations Charter, the United States is obligated to conform to the stipulations of the U.S. Constitution, which identifies all such agreements as treaties that hold the authority of U.S. law. The U.S. government is pledged to abide by its principles and guidelines in the conduct of foreign relations and affairs.
- b. We recognize our government's obligation to take disputes with other nations or foreign bodies to the U.N. Security Council and General Assembly forum for negotiation and resolution. The U.N. and international laws, treaties and conventions that the U.S. has signed are the framework that controls U.S. military actions abroad.
- c. The U.S. must recognize the sovereignty of nation-states and their right of self-determination.
- d. We recognize and support the right of the U.N. to intervene in a nation-state engaged in genocidal acts or in its persistent violation and denial of the human rights of an ethnic or religious group within its boundaries, and the right to protect the victims of such acts.
- e. The U.S. is obligated to render military assistance or service under U.N. command to enforce U.N. Security Council resolutions.

- f. The U.S. must recognize and abide by the authority of the U.N. General Assembly to act in a crisis situation by passing a resolution under the Uniting for Peace Procedure when the U.N. Security Council is stalemated by vetoes.
- g. We seek the permanent repeal of the veto power enjoyed by the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.
- h. We urge our government to sign the International Criminal Court agreement and respect the authority of that institution.
- i. Our government does not have the right to justify preemptive invasion of another country on the grounds that the other country harbors, trains, equips and funds a terrorist cell.
- j. Our government should establish a policy to abolish nuclear weapons. It should set the conditions and schedule for fulfilling that goal by taking the following steps:
  - Declare a no-first-strike policy.
  - Declare a no-pre-emptive strike policy.
  - Declare that the U.S. will never threaten or use a nuclear weapon, regardless of size, on a non-nuclear nation.
  - Sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Our pledge to end testing will open the way for non-nuclear states to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which has been held up by our refusal to sign the CTBT. Honor the conditions set in the NPT for nuclear nations.
  - Reverse our withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and honor its stipulations.
  - End the research, testing and stockpiling of all nuclear weapons of any size.
  - Dismantle all nuclear warheads from their missiles.
- k. We urge our government to sign the Toronto treaty banning the production, stockpiling, use and sale of land mines, and assist other nations in unearthing and disabling land mines buried in their lands.
- l. We urge our government to end all stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons and all research, use, and sale of such weapons; and sign the convention that will establish the decrease and inspection of all nations' stockpiles of such weapons, which the U.S. abandoned.
- m. The U.S. must allow foreign teams to visit the U.S. for verification purposes at least annually.

- n. Our defense budget has increased out of all proportion to any military threat to the United States, and to our domestic social, economic and environmental needs. The United States government must reduce our defense budget to half of its current size. The 2012 defense budget exceeded \$700 billion, and that does not take into account military expenditures not placed under the defense budget.
- o. The U.S. has over 700 foreign military bases. We urge our government to phase out all bases not specifically functioning under a U.N. resolution to keep peace and bring home our troops stationed abroad, except for the military assigned to protect a U.S. embassy. Many of these bases are small and can be closed immediately. We advocate further reductions in U.S. foreign military bases at a rate of closure of 1/4 to 1/5 of their numbers every year.
- p. Close the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly known as the School of the Americas, in Ft. Benning, Georgia.
- q. The U.S. is the largest arms seller and dealer in the world. We urge our government to prohibit all arms sales to foreign nations and likewise prohibit grants to impoverished and undemocratic nations unless the money is targeted on domestic, non-military needs. In addition, grants to other nations may not be used to release their own funds for military purposes.
- r. The U.S. must not be a conduit for defense contractors to market their products abroad and must shift our export market from arms to peaceful technology, industrial and agricultural products, and education.
- s. The U.S. must prohibit all covert actions used to influence, de-stabilize or usurp the governments of other nations, and likewise prohibit the assassination of, or assistance in any form for the assassination of, foreign government officials.
- t. We must build on the Earth Charter that came out of the 1992 U.N. environmental Earth Summit. New definitions of what constitutes real security between nations must be debated and adopted by the foreign policy community.

## **2. A Real Road to Peace in the Middle East**

The Green Party of the United States recognizes that our greatest contribution to peace in the Middle East will come through our impact on U.S. policy in the region.

Our commitments to ecological wisdom, social justice, grass-roots democracy, and non-violence compel us to oppose U.S. government support for "friendly" regimes in the region when those regimes violate human rights, international law, and existing treaties. We call on congressional intelligence committees to conduct comprehensive public hearings on the development and deployment of weapons of mass destruction by all states in the region.

U.S. policy should support the removal and/or destruction of all such weapons wherever they are found there.

## **Iran**

The Green Party supports the "joint comprehensive plan of action" signed in July, 2015 by Iran and the P5+1 (five permanent members of the UN Security Council: China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States plus Germany), and the European Union, which confirms Iran's status as a zone free of nuclear weapons. According to the United States National Intelligence Estimate, Iran halted an alleged active nuclear weapons program in the Fall of 2003. Iran, which has signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, has consistently called for a nuclear-free zone in the entire Middle East.

The "joint comprehensive plan of action" provides that in return for Iran upholding its agreements to rid itself of nuclear material as verified by inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), current economic sanctions by the US, European Union and UN Security Council will be lifted. The Green Party supports the swift elimination of these economic sanctions on Iran and looks to the normalization of relations between Iran and the United States. In keeping with UN resolutions call for a nuclear-free Middle East, the Green Party also calls on Israel, the only nuclear power in the Middle East with at least 200 nuclear warheads, to dismantle its nuclear weapons program and sign on to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

## **The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict**

Our Green values oblige us to support popular movements for peace and demilitarization in Israel-Palestine, especially those that reach across the lines of conflict to engage both Palestinians and Israelis of good will.

- a. We reaffirm the right of self-determination for both Palestinians and Israelis, which precludes the self-determination of one at the expense of the other. We recognize the historical and contemporary cultural diversity of Israeli-Palestinian society, including the religious heritage of Jews, Christians, Muslims and others. This is a significant part of the rich cultural legacy of all these peoples and it must be respected. To ensure this, we support equality before international law rather than appeals to religious faith as the fair basis on which claims to the land of Palestine-Israel are resolved.
- b. We recognize that Jewish insecurity and fear of non-Jews is understandable in light of Jewish history of horrific oppression in Europe. However, we oppose as both discriminatory and ultimately self-defeating the position that Jews would be fundamentally threatened by the implementation of full rights to Palestinian-Israelis and Palestinian refugees who wish to return to their homes. As U.S. Greens, we refuse to impose our views on the people of the region. Still, we would turn the U.S. government towards a new policy, which itself recognizes the equality, humanity, and

civil rights of Jews, Muslims, Christians, and all others who live in the region, and which seeks to build confidence in prospects for secular democracy.

- c. We reaffirm the right and feasibility of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Israel. We acknowledge the significant challenges of equity and restitution this policy would encounter and call on the U.S. government to make resolution of these challenges a central goal of our diplomacy in the region.
- d. We reject U.S. unbalanced financial and military support of Israel while Israel occupies Palestinian lands and maintains an apartheid-like system in both the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Israel toward its non-Jewish citizens. Therefore, we call on the U.S. President and Congress to suspend all military and foreign aid, including loans and grants, to Israel until Israel withdraws from the Occupied Territories, dismantles the separation wall in the Occupied West Bank including East Jerusalem, ends its siege of Gaza and its apartheid-like system both within the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Israel toward its non-Jewish citizens.
- e. We also reject U.S. political support for Israel and demand that the U.S. government end its veto of Security Council resolutions pertaining to Israel. We urge our government to join with the U.N. to secure Israel's complete withdrawal to the 1967 boundaries and its compliance with international law.
- f. We support a much stronger and supportive U.S. position with respect to all United Nations, European Union, and Arab League initiatives that seek a negotiated peace. We call for an immediate U.N.-sponsored, multinational peacekeeping and protection force in the Palestinian territories with the mandate to initiate a conflict-resolution commission.
- g. We call on the foreign and military affairs committees of the U.S. House and Senate to conduct full hearings on the status of human rights and war crimes in Palestine-Israel, especially violations committed during Israel's 2008-2009 invasion of Gaza ("Operation Cast Lead") as documented in the 2009 "UN Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict" ("The Goldstone Report") authorized by the UN Commission on Human Rights.
- h. We recognize that despite decades of continuous diplomatic attempts by the international community, it has failed to bring about Israel's compliance with international law or respect for basic Palestinian human rights; and that, despite abundant condemnation of Israel's policies by the UN, International Court of Justice, and all relevant international conventions, the international community of nations has failed to stop Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights in Israel and the OPT, while Israeli crimes continue with impunity. We recall that ending institutionalized racism (apartheid) in South Africa demanded an unusual, cooperative action by the entire international community in the form of a boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) campaign against apartheid South Africa, and that BDS can become the most effective

nonviolent means for achieving justice and genuine peace between Palestinians and Israelis, and for the region, through concerted international pressure as applied to apartheid South Africa; and that Palestinian resistance to ongoing dispossession has mainly been nonviolent, including its most basic form—remaining in their homes, on their land; and that while Palestinian armed resistance is legitimate under international law when directed at non-civilian targets, we believe that only nonviolent resistance will maintain the humanity of Palestinian society, elicit the greatest solidarity from others, and maximize the chance for future reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. However, we also recognize that our appeal to Palestinians to continue to resist nonviolently in the face of ongoing existential threats from Israel is hypocritical unless accompanied by substantial acts of international support. We recall that in 2005, Palestinian Civil Society appealed to the international community to support a BDS campaign against Israel, and that in response the Green Party of the US endorsed this BDS campaign in 2005. Therefore, we support the implementation of boycott and divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era, which includes pressuring our government to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel; and we support maintaining these nonviolent punitive measures until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law by

1. Ending its occupation and colonization of all Palestinian lands and dismantling the Wall in the West Bank
  2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and
  3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.
- i. We recognize that international opinion has been committed to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Yet, we view the two-state solution as neither democratic nor viable in the face of international law, material conditions and "facts on the ground" that now exist in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Given this reality, we support a U.S. foreign policy that promotes the creation of one secular, democratic state for Palestinians and Israelis on the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan as the national home of both peoples, with Jerusalem as its capital. We encourage a new U.S. diplomatic initiative to begin the long process of negotiation, laying the groundwork for such a single-state constitution.
  - j. We recognize that such a state might take many forms and that the eventual model chosen must be decided by the peoples themselves. We also acknowledge the enormous hostilities that now exist between the two peoples, but history tells us that these are not insurmountable among people genuinely seeking peace.

- k. As an integral part of peace negotiations and the transition to peaceful democracy, we call for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission whose inaugurating action would be mutual acknowledgement by Israelis and Palestinians that they have the same basic rights, including the right to exist in the same, secure place.

### 3. Foreign Policy – Trade

We urge our government to do the following:

- a. Re-formulate all international trade relations and commerce as currently upheld by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) to protect the labor, human rights, economy, environment and domestic industry of partner and recipient nations so that the growth of local industry and agriculture has the advantage over foreign corporate domination. The U.S. government should call for replacing the WTO, IMF, and World Bank with new institutions that are democratic, transparent, and accountable to the citizens of all nations.
- b. While the IMF and World Bank still exist in their current forms, re-structure the rules of performance of the IMF/WB to end the debts of recipient nations, prohibit the use of IMF/WB loans to impose structural adjustment programs that emphasize debt service and export-led development at the expense of social needs, and to install strict standards in the IMF/WB that control the use of grants or loans to prevent fraud, misuse, and subversion of funds by recipient governments.
- c. Re-write the rules for investment of corporate capital in projects operated under the IMF/WB to guarantee the rights of the citizens of the nations receiving the investment and their right to public ownership and control of their own resources.
- d. Mandate and protect labor's right to organize, create unions and negotiate with management in all countries receiving U.S. investment, and require U.S. corporations that operate in other countries to adhere to the core labor standards established by the International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
- e. Legislate and enable oversight by an independent agency or a labor union to verify that foreign workers' rights are protected.
- f. At home, secure the rights of our states to establish stricter standards for health, safety, and for the environment than those of our national government, and to protect themselves against substandard, imported goods.
- g. Secure the right of states and municipalities to refuse to invest in foreign businesses that do not abide by their standards for imported goods, fair trade, and environmental protection.

- h. Prohibit U.S. corporations from avoiding or evading payment of their taxes by banking abroad or locating their charters offshore.
- i. Every day over \$1 trillion dollars circles the globe in currency trade—wreaking havoc on low-economy nations –without obligation to sustainable investment. We seek to restrict the unfettered flow of capital and currency trade, and levy the Tobin tax of .05% on cross border currency transactions. [See section E. 2. Fair Taxation in chapter IV]
- j. We support the funding and expansion of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in their missions to educate and train people of less developed nations in initiating local business and economic development, and in providing health care and family planning.
- k. Under the agency of the United Nations, we demand that our government renew and initiate government funding and support for family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that request it.
- l. We reject the U.S. government's economic blockade of Cuba. We ask the U.S. Congress to lift the embargo and restore normal diplomatic relations and respect for national sovereignty, and demand that the U.S. government end its veto of U.N. resolutions pertaining to Cuba.

#### **4. Human Rights**

We propose the following amendment to the Constitution of the United States:

1. The rights established by this Constitution and the laws of the United States of America are exclusively the rights of living, breathing humans, citizens of this country or residing therein. No corporation or other type of association or organization can have the status of a "legal person" and thus cannot derive rights from such status.
2. These organizations have no permanent, constitutionally protected rights, though they may have such powers or immunities as are explicitly granted to them by legislative actions at either the federal or the state level. These powers or immunities may be modified or removed by later action of the same legislative bodies. In no case can these powers or immunities override the constitutionally protected rights of human beings.

#### **5. Women's Rights**

- a. The Green Party makes a strong and urgent call for U.S. passage of CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and ratified by 173 countries. It is also known as the Women's Convention, the Women's Bill of Rights, and an International Bill of Rights for Women. The United States is one of a very few countries and the only industrialized nation that has not ratified it.

- b. The illegal international trafficking in humans, primarily women, has reached staggering numbers and consequences around the world. The Green Party supports the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime adopted by the UN General Assembly in November 2000 as an important tool to facilitate international cooperation. The U.S. and 80 other countries signed the Protocol in December 2000 and by doing so have made a commitment to criminalize trafficking and to protect its many victims. We call for effective collaborative relationships between sending and receiving countries, including the U.S. We also call for studies analyzing and connecting the role of globalization in trafficking.

## 6. Puerto Rican Independence

In 1898, Puerto Rico was invaded by the United States and has been held by the U.S. in the form of a colony ever since. In response to international pressure, in 1952, the U.S. established the "Free Associated State" status for Puerto Rico but continued to claim that Puerto Rico belongs to, yet is not a part of, the United States. The root of the crisis is the colonial status of Puerto Rico as echoed in the UN Decolonization committee resolution on Puerto Rico adopted on June 22, 2015 which states "the condition of political subordination prevents Puerto Rico from taking sovereign decisions to attend to its serious economic and social problems including unemployment, marginalization and poverty (Olga Sanabria Davila, Crisis and Colonialism in Puerto Rico, 10/26/15).

Greens support the right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence in conformity with United Nations Resolution 1514(XV) of 1960. Greens call for the release of all Puerto Rican political prisoners, such as Oscar Lopez Rivera, who has been held in U.S. prisons since 1981.

Greens call for the appropriate environmental clean-up and sustainable development of Vieques, the island that was used as a firing range by the U.S. military. Greens oppose recruitment of the youth of Puerto Rico into the U.S. armed forces and their deployment to U.S. wars abroad, and denounce recruitment attempts at educational institutions.

Further, Greens recognize that:

- Puerto Rico's debt is unpayable.
- That in the last 20 years alone, foreign corporations operating in Puerto Rico have reaped over 600 billion dollars in tax free profits, 10 per cent of which would suffice to pay its current otherwise unpayable debt.
- Austerity measures like a "Financial Control Authority," which have proven to exacerbate economic suffering and strip away democratic rights to self-determination, must be opposed.

- The social cost of increasing the sales tax, of reducing workers' pay, education and health services, of eliminating labor rights gained and the dismantling of the retirement system among other recessionary measures, are a detriment to the quality of life of the people of Puerto Rico and to the strategic development of the country's economy.

Thus, these measures are not a solution.

The present fiscal and economic crisis in Puerto Rico is largely due to the United States' colonial power and exploitation in Puerto Rico. Further, although Puerto Rico is a tropical island country seriously being affected by climate change, it is powerless to participate in initiatives and international negotiations to control and mitigate climate change and global warming.

### **Conclusion**

As a colony of the United States, Puerto Rico's position of political subordination cuts across the problem and independence would break the stalemate and create the possibilities of a solution.

Commitment to grassroots democracy is totally consistent with support for the decolonization of Puerto Rico as colonialism is contrary to democracy. For the country ruled, democracy is non-existent where one country rules over another, even if there are elections every four years to elect local authorities.

Taking into account that in Puerto Rico the United States controls commerce, international relations, immigration, monetary issues, communications, postal matters, defense, labor relations, and others, to truly support democracy in Puerto Rico, its decolonization has to be supported as the first step for the Puerto Rican people to live in a democracy.

### **7. Kurdistan**

The Kurdish people are the largest ethnic group in the world that is without an independent state. As a result, Kurdish people have historically suffered persecution and injustice. The Kurdish people have been besieged to the point of a current humanitarian crisis in towns such as Kobani, Syria. The GPUS expresses solidarity for and affirms the right to self-determination, self-defense, communal autonomy, freedom from persecution, and release of political prisoners for the Kurdish population.

### **E. Domestic Security**

Greens want to stop the assault on our civil liberties that intensified after the attacks of September 11, 2001, and restore these and other freedoms to all people.

During the last several decades, there has been an erosion of freedom in the United States. This has come from many sources and takes many forms, including the war on

drugs and widespread imprisonment of nonviolent drug offenders; the increased use of personal identification, surveillance of employees at work, and the growing use of private security forces by corporations; restrictions on the speech of protesters and students; and random traffic stops of persons of color and the commonplace use of roadblocks.

Since 9/11, this erosion has turned into a collapse of our freedoms, as then President Bush authorized torture, illegal wiretapping, indefinite detention without trial, and widespread government surveillance.

Greens believe that all such systematic degradation or elimination of our constitutional protections must stop, and that corrective measures need to be taken in a timely manner by Congress to fully reinstate all such losses of guaranteed citizen protections.

1. The Green Party calls for a complete, thorough, impartial, and independent investigation of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, including the role of the administration of George W. Bush, various U.S. based corporations and interests, and other nations and third parties.
2. We call for the repeal of the USA PATRIOT Act. Many of its provisions, along with many of the other so-called National Security Acts, undermine and erode our Bill of Rights, and contribute to the destruction of the democratic foundation of checks and balances between the branches of government.
3. Strictly enforce our First Amendment rights of speech, assembly, association and petition. Federal, state and local governments must safeguard our right to public, non-violent protest. It is intolerable that law enforcement agencies intimidate lawful protesters with brutality, surveillance, repression and retaliation.
4. End torture, such as in prisons like Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay and other U.S.-controlled facilities. Ensure those guilty of ordering or executing torture are held accountable for violations U.S. and international law.
5. Restore habeas corpus, a legal action to obtain relief from illegal detention. End the use of indefinite detention without trial.
6. Revoke the 2011 re-authorization of the Patriot Act, including "John Doe" roving wiretaps and the "library records" provision.
7. End the abuse of National Security Letters, which the FBI uses to force Internet service providers, libraries, banks, and credit reporting companies to reveal sensitive information about their patrons.
8. End illegal government spying, including the use of warrantless wiretaps. Three federal judges have ruled that President Bush's National Security Agency warrantless wiretaps violated the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which contains criminal

sanctions. Ensure that anyone who violated the FISA is held accountable for crimes committed.

9. Enact a constitutional amendment affirming that the rights outlined in our Bill of Rights are human rights and do not apply in any way to corporations.
10. Support U.S. constitutional guarantees for freedom of religion, separation of church and state, and that there shall be no religious test for public office. Eliminate federal, state, and local laws that discriminate against particular religious beliefs or non-belief. End faith-based initiatives and charitable choice programs, whereby public funds are used to support religious organizations that may not adhere to specified guidelines and standards, including anti-discrimination laws.
11. Oppose the death penalty in the United States and worldwide.
12. Support students' constitutional rights to free speech.
13. Ensure that government actions towards immigrants comply with our Constitution and universal human rights principles.
14. Support strict Fourth Amendment protections against illegal search and seizure.
15. Recognize that the privacy protections of the 4th amendment extend to the Internet. Demand the elimination of bulk Internet data collection by our government. Fund and promote research into alternate Internet structures that would build in privacy. Hold criminally accountable all government officials, employees and contractors who illegally spy on Americans, and who provide false, misleading or incomplete testimony to Congress about surveillance of American communications by law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

## **F. Demilitarization and Exploration of Space**

The Green Party recognizes the need for the inspiration and education that the peaceful exploration of Space provides; the need for space-based systems to monitor environmental conditions on Earth; the many advances in space technology that benefit all people on Earth; and the inspiration provided to children by Space exploration can prompt them to pursue math, science, and other important courses of study.

The peaceful exploration of Space has been usurped by the militarization of Space. The last four U.S.-backed military conflicts have used space-based technology to disrupt the computer and communication systems of sovereign states. The funds required for continuing peaceful Space exploration have been used, instead, for the design, implementation and deployment of wasteful and dangerous Space hardware, such as the Strategic Defense Initiative.

1. The Green Party calls for the end of Space militarization and opposes any form of space-based military aggression. We embrace peaceful Space exploration as a means for all people on this planet to work together. The benefits of inspired education are well worth the investment in peaceful Space exploration.
2. The Green Party supports only the peaceful and sustainable exploration of Space, on a case-by-case, mission-specific basis, including the signing of the International Treaty for the Demilitarization of Space. The Green Party advocates a reduction of human-staffed space flight due to the high cost and risk for human life and the availability of automated technology that can perform necessary functions in space-based research.

## **II. Social Justice (2016)**

Historically, America led the world in establishing a society with democratic values such as equal opportunity and protection from discrimination. Today, however, our country is among the most extreme examples of industrialized nations that have a widening gap between the wealthy and the rest of its citizenry – the working poor, the struggling middle class, and those who increasingly cannot make ends meet.

Our public schools, from kindergarten through college, are forced to cut back countless programs and services. Fees for community colleges are up sharply, and many public universities must turn away qualified students. More than 50 million Americans have no medical insurance coverage. The crisis in publicly subsidized housing is intensifying, while publicly funded "corporate welfare" continues unabated. Our tax code favors the wealthy. Our criminal justice system assigns long prison terms to hundreds of thousands of perpetrators of victimless crimes, such as selling marijuana. Our civil liberties of privacy and free speech are impaired by the excesses of the USA PATRIOT Act and kindred new laws that use a national tragedy (the attacks on September 11, 2001) as an excuse to impose ubiquitous surveillance and control over citizens. In addition, discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or race continues to sap the potential of our society and to violate personal dignity.

Feelings of isolation and helplessness are common in America today. Children are increasingly shaped by an "electronic childhood" with little direct experience of nature and free play. Our families are scattered, our popular culture is crassly manipulated by the profit motives of increasingly concentrated media conglomerates, and our sense of community is a pale shadow of what earlier generations of Americans knew.

The Green Party strongly believes that quality of life is determined not only by material aspects that can be measured and counted, but also by elements that cannot be quantified. We firmly support the separation of church and state, but we also acknowledge the spiritual dimension of life, and we honor the cultivation of various types of spiritual experience in our diverse society.

We believe that artistic expression and a thriving structure of art institutions are key to community well-being. We believe that a deep and broad embrace of nonviolence is the only effective way to stop cycles of violence, from the home to the streets to the international level. We advocate a diverse system of education that would introduce children early to the wonders of the Great School (Nature), and would cultivate the wisdom of eco-education, eco-economics, eco-politics, and eco-culture. We seek to protect our children from the corrosive effects of mass culture that trains them to regard themselves first and foremost as consumers.

We support the shift in modern medicine to include healing through complementary therapies and engagement with the Great Hospital (Nature). We seek, in short, to facilitate the healthy unfolding of the person within the unfolding story of the family, community, bioregion, state, nation, and Earth community.

## **A. Civil Rights and Equal Rights**

The foundation of any democratic society is the guarantee that each member of society has equal rights. Respect for our constitutionally protected rights is our best defense against discrimination and the abuse of power. Also, we recognize an intimate connection between our rights as individuals and our responsibilities to our neighbors and the planet. The Green Party shall strive to secure universal and effective recognition and observance of the principles and spirit expressed in the United National Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an international standard that all nations must meet.

One of our key values is respect for diversity. We are committed to establishing relationships that honor diversity; that support the self-definition and self-determination of all people; and that consciously confront the barriers of racism, sexism, homophobia, class oppression, ageism, and the many ways our culture separates us from working together. We support affirmative action to remedy discrimination, to protect constitutional rights and to provide equal opportunity under the law.

### **1. Women's Rights**

Since the beginning of what we call civilization, when men's dominance over women was firmly established, until the present day, our history has been marred with oppression of and brutality to women. The Green Party deplores this system of male domination, known as patriarchy, in all its forms, both subtle and overt — from oppression, inequality, and discrimination to all forms of violence against women and girls including rape, trafficking, forced sex which is also rape, slavery, prostitution and violence against women within marriage and relationships and in all institutions. The change the world is crying for cannot occur unless women's voices are heard. Democracy cannot work without equality for women, which provides equal participation and representation. It took an extraordinary and ongoing fight over 72 years for women to win the right to vote. However, the Equal Rights Amendment, first introduced in 1923, has still not been ratified by 2012, representing a continuous struggle of 87 years with no victory in sight. We

believe that equality should be a given, and that all Greens must work toward that end. We are committed to increasing participation of women in politics, government and leadership so they can change laws, make decisions, and create policy solutions that affect and will improve women's lives, and we are building our party so that Greens can be elected to office to do this. In July 2002 the National Women's Caucus of the Green Party of the United States was founded to carry out the Party's commitment to women.

We also support, and call on others to support, the many existing and ongoing efforts for women:

### **Social Equality**

- a. We support the equal application of the Constitution of the United States of America to all citizens, and therefore call for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). We urge accelerated ratification by three or more of the remaining 15 states that are required to pass ERA into law and into the Constitution. We urge renewed efforts and campaigns to ratify the ERA. We support the Equal Rights Amendment reintroduced in the U.S. Congress, and support using the precedent of a three-state strategy for ratification.
- b. We call for equal representation of women in Congress instead of the current 17% in 2012.
- c. The Green Party calls for U.S. passage of CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, which was adopted in 1979 by the U.N. General Assembly and ratified by 173 countries. The U.S. is one of the very few countries, and the only industrialized nation, that have not ratified it.
- d. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission should actively investigate and prosecute sexual harassment complaints. Women who file complaints must not be persecuted and should be protected under federal and state law. We must enshrine in law the basic principle that women have the same rights as men, and promote gender equality and fairness in the work force to ensure that women receive equal pay for jobs of equal worth.
- e. We support the inclusion of an equal number of women and men in peace talks and negotiations, not only because these efforts directly affect their lives and those of their husbands, children and families, but also because when women are involved, the negotiations are more successful.

### **Reproductive Rights**

Women's rights must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman's right as a full participant in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination or interference in the intensely personal choice about whether to have a child.

Women's right to control their bodies is non-negotiable. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available. The "morning-after" pill must be affordable and easily accessible without a prescription, together with a government-sponsored public relations campaign to educate women about this form of contraception. Clinics must be accessible and must offer advice on contraception and the means for contraception; consultation about abortion and the performance of abortions, and; abortion regardless of age or marital status.

We endorse women's right to use contraception and, when they choose, to have an abortion. This right cannot be limited to women's age or marital status. Contraception and abortion must be included in all health insurance policies in the U.S., and any state government must be able to legally offer these services free of charge to women at the poverty level. Public health agencies operating abroad should be allowed to offer family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that ask for those services. We oppose our government's habit of cutting family planning funds when those funds go to agencies in foreign countries that give out contraceptive devices, offer advice on abortion, and perform abortions.

We encourage women and men to prevent unwanted pregnancies. It is the inalienable right and duty of every woman to learn about her body and to be aware of the phases of her menstrual cycle, and it is the duty for every man to be aware of the functions and health of his and his partner's bodies. This information is necessary for self-determination, to make informed decisions, and to prevent unintended consequences. Unplanned conception takes control away from individuals and makes them subject to external controls. The "morning-after" pill and option of a safe and legal abortion need to remain available.

### **Economic Equality**

Since, nationally, women earn only 77% of men's wages for equal work, despite outnumbering men in the workforce and despite the U.S. 1963 Equal Pay Act, we support intensified effort to see this unfair gap closed, including support for the Paycheck Fairness Act and similar legislation, and greater effort at enforcement.

Single mothers are the largest and most severely impoverished group in the United States, which explains why 22% of the children in our country live below the poverty line. Welfare reform has forced mothers to abandon their children while they travel to work at minimum wage jobs. With the extreme pay inequity, single mothers cannot afford child care, nurture their children, and move out of poverty.

The Green Party supports real reforms to end poverty and return dignity and opportunity to all mothers. We call for implementing innovative programs that work with the particular and special needs of motherhood. We also support other programs such as a universal

basic income (known also as a guaranteed income or Citizen Dividend, as described in True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness, IV. E.) that will provide for those who nurture the next generation – work that is of incalculable importance to our society.

## **Violence and Oppression**

Language is often used as a weapon by those with power, and women have traditionally borne the brunt of inflicted injuries. Freedom of speech is vital to democracy. However, we believe that this freedom should not be used to perpetuate oppression and abuse.

Violence against women is increasing nationwide. We must address the root cause of all violence even as we specifically address violence to women. We support stronger legislation, programs and enforcement. We also call for new dialog and re-thinking that can lead to better language, ideas and solutions. We urge that the term "domestic violence" be replaced by the term "violence," because "domestic violence" is not perceived as real violence, which leads to it not being treated legally and practically for the violence that it is. We urge that the term "sex work" not be used in relation to prostitution. With the increasing conflation of trafficking (the violent and illegal trafficking in women and girls for forced sex) with prostitution, it is impossible to know which is which, and what violence the term "sex work" is masking. No source in existence knows which forms of prostitution comprise forced sex and which comprise free will or choice prostitution. Forced sex is rape, and it is a crime. An increasing number of experts think the percentage of choice prostitution is very small, leaving the larger number of women exposed to serious and often fatal violence. Much of what is commonly called prostitution is actually sex trafficking by definition. The Green Party calls for a safer world for women and girls.

The Green Party has zero tolerance for the illegal international trafficking in humans. Of the millions of humans trafficked worldwide, the large majority are women and children who are bought and sold as slaves. They are kept captive and in debt-bondage that can never be paid off. Most are sold over and over again for forced sex prostitution. Forced sex is rape and a serious crime. Some are forced to labor in agriculture, sweat shops, hotels, restaurants, domestic service and other forms of servitude. According to Human Rights Watch, in all cases coercive tactics – including deception, fraud, intimidation, isolation, threat and use of physical force, or debt bondage – are used to control women. Estimates of human trafficking in the U.S. vary greatly from 18,000 to 50,000 to over 100,000 with a worldwide estimate of 12.5 million, mostly women and children.

The Green Party calls for new U.S. legislation relating to prostitution modeled on the Swedish law passed in 1999, now adopted by other countries and being considered by more, that has drastically reduced human trafficking and prostitution in Sweden. That law criminalizes the purchase of services from prostitutes, pimps and brothel keepers instead of criminalizing the prostitutes. The Green Party urges the U.S. to open dialogs and visit with Sweden as a step toward introducing legislation in the U.S. Congress to address the exploitation, violence and harm to women through prostitution.

The Green Party supports all efforts to eradicate this extreme abuse of human rights, including but not limited to enforcement of existing laws and passage of tough new ones, punishing traffickers, aiding victims, increasing public awareness, reforming immigration laws, supporting existing programs and creating new ones.

We support the State Department's annual Trafficking in Persons Report as an important document to begin to combat this abuse. We support and urge enforcement of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (HR 3244) signed into law on October 28, 2000. This Act authorizes funding for the prevention of trade in human beings and for protecting victims. It gives the State Department a historic opportunity to create an office with the exclusive responsibility of ending traffic in humans and protecting the victims of this worldwide trade. We urge committed political support to achieve the cooperation of all different levels of government.

The Green Party urges a more thorough dialog and understanding of violence against women and girls, including from prostitution and trafficking, that causes health and injury damage that seriously degrades their lives, even to death or premature death including from HIV, syphilis and many other diseases, as well as causing severe economic hardships. We call for solutions to this enormous problem that can result in awareness and the introduction of legislation in the U.S. Congress to address it.

## **2. Racial Discrimination**

- a. The development of the United States has been marked by conflict over questions of race. Our nation was formed only after Native Americans were displaced. The institution of slavery had as its underpinnings the belief in white supremacy, which we as Greens condemn. In slavery's aftermath, people of color have borne the brunt of violence and discrimination. The Green Party unequivocally condemns these evils, which continue to be a social problem of paramount significance.
- b. The community of people of African ancestry whose family members were held in chattel slavery in what is now the United States of America have legitimate claims to reparations including monetary compensation for centuries of human rights violations, including the Transatlantic slave trade now recognized by the United Nations as a "crime against humanity." As our Nation has done in the past with respect to the Choctaw, the Lakota, the Lambuth, and more recently for Japanese Americans and the European Jewish community, reparations are now due to address the debt still owed to descendants of enslaved Africans.
- c. We commit to full and complete reparations to the African American community of this nation for the past four hundred plus years of genocide, slavery, land-loss, destruction of original identity and the stark disparities which haunt the present evidenced in unemployment statistics, substandard and inadequate education, higher levels of mortality including infant and maternal mortality and the practice of mass incarceration. We recognize that reparations are a debt (not charity) that is owed by

our own and other nations and by the corporate institutions chartered under our laws to a collective of people. We believe that the leadership on the question of what our nation owes to this process of right ought to come from the African American community, whose right to self-determination and autonomy to chart the path to healing we fully recognize.

- d. We understand that until significant steps are taken to reverse the ongoing abuses; to end the criminalization of the Black and Brown communities, to eradicate poverty, to invest in education, health care and the restoration and protection of human rights, that it will be impossible to repair the continuing damage wrought by the ideology of white supremacy which permeates the governing institutions of our nation.
- e. While consensus is still evolving on what would constitute full and complete reparations, we support the following initial steps: We support the creation of a claim of action and a right to recover inherited wealth and other profits accumulated from the slave trade for the benefit of a reparations trust fund. We will initiate the repeal of the slave clauses that survive today in the U.S. Constitution. We will work to restore lands stolen through a variety of tactics including: violence, terrorism and the discriminatory access to operating capital that together has robbed black farmers and the broader community of their lands. We support the release of all political prisoners held by the USA. It is time that the political frame-ups, the prosecutorial misconduct and the racist application of police power that pass for justice in our country be buried and those victimized by these abuses of state power be given their lives back. We will support existing Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as well as new and existing Education and Development Funds.
- f. We support efforts to overcome the effects of over 200 years of racial discrimination.
- g. We call for an end to official support for any remaining symbols of slavery and specifically call for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from all government buildings.
- h. We condemn the practice of racial profiling by law enforcement agencies, which are guilty of stopping motorists, harassing individuals, or using unwarranted violence against suspects with no other justification than race or ethnic background.
- i. We favor strong measures to combat official racism in the forms of police brutality directed against people of color.
- j. We support effective enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, including language access to voting.
- k. We oppose discriminatory English-only pressure groups. We call for a national language policy that would encourage all citizens to be fluent in at least two languages.

[See section K. Immigration / Emigration in this chapter]

- I. We strongly support the vigorous enforcement of civil-rights laws, the aggressive prosecution of hate crimes, and the strengthening of legal services for the poor.

### **3. Indigenous Peoples**

We have great respect for Native American cultures, especially their deference for community and the Earth.

- a. We recognize both the sovereignty of Native American tribal governments and the Federal Government's trust obligation to Native American people. Native American nations are just that – nations – and should be treated in like fashion, with the special circumstance that they are located within the United States.
- b. The federal government is obligated to deal in good faith with Native Americans; honor its treaty obligations; adequately fund programs for the betterment of tribal governments and their people; affirm the religious rights of Native Americans in ceremonies (American Indian Religious Freedom Act); provide funds for innovative economic development initiatives, education and public health programs; and respect land, water and mineral rights within the borders of reservations and traditional lands.
- c. We support efforts to broadly reform the Bureau of Indian Affairs to make this vast agency more responsible and more responsive to tribal governments.
- d. We support the just settlement of the claims of the thousands of Native American uranium miners who have suffered and died from radiation exposure. We condemn the stance of secrecy taken by the Atomic Energy Commission during this era and its subsequent claim of government immunity, taken knowingly and immorally at the expense of Native people. We support the complete clean-up of those mines and tailing piles, which are a profoundly destructive legacy of the Cold War.
- e. Native American land and treaty rights often stand as the front line against government and multinational corporate attempts to plunder energy, mineral, timber, fish, and game resources; pollute water, air, and land in the service of the military; expand economically; and consume natural resources. We support legal, political, and grassroots efforts by, and on behalf of, Native Americans to protect their traditions, rights, livelihoods, and sacred spaces.
- f. The Green Party supports the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, their ways of life, and all other rights of free peoples. We support the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN General Assembly on September 13, 2007, and call for its provisions to be actively supported by our own government and by governments worldwide.

#### **4. Justice for Native Hawaiians: Kanaka Maoli**

Since illegal annexation in 1898, the federal and state governments have cheated and neglected the native Hawaiian people. In 1993, the U.S. Congress passed, and President Clinton signed into law, the "Apology Bill" (U.S. Public Law 103-150). This admission of crime states in part, "the native Hawaiians have never lost their inherent sovereignty nor their national home base."

The Green Party demands justice for Kanaka Maoli. We support the following:

- a. Protecting sacred and culturally significant sites.
- b. Efforts to nurture native Hawaiian culture.
- c. Kanaka maoli leadership and guardianship in protecting gathering rights, and lobbying the legislature to safeguard these rights without interference.
- d. Return of, or fair compensation for, ceded lands.
- e. Immediate distribution of Hawaiian Homelands, with government funds allocated for the necessary infrastructure.
- f. Prohibition of future sale or diminishments of the Ceded Land Trust.
- g. A call for open dialogue among all residents of Hawai'i on the sovereignty option of full independence.
- h. Hawaiian sovereignty in a form that is fair to both native Hawaiians and other residents of Hawai'i.
- i. We acknowledge and actively endorse the inherent and absolute right of indigenous nations to self-determination, and thereby call upon the U.S. government to reverse its opposition to enactment of the proposed United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in its entirety.

#### **5. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

In keeping with the Green Key Values of diversity, social justice and feminism, we support full legal and political equality for all persons, regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity, characteristics, and expression.

- a. The Green Party affirms the rights of all individuals to freely choose intimate partners, regardless of their sex, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- b. The Green Party recognizes the equal rights of persons who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex, trans-sexual, queer, or transgender to housing, jobs, civil marriage, medical benefits, child custody, and in all areas of life including equal tax treatment.

- c. The Green Party will be inclusive of language in local, state and federal anti-discrimination law that ensures the rights of intersex individuals and prohibits discrimination based on gender identity, characteristics, and expression as well as on sex, gender, or sexual orientation. We are opposed to intersex genital mutilation.
- d. The Green Party affirms the right of all persons to self-determination with regard to gender identity and sex. We therefore support the right of intersex and trans-gender individuals to be free from coercion and involuntary assignment of gender or sex. We affirm the right of access to medical and surgical treatment for assignment or reassignment of gender or sex, based on informed consent.
- e. We will pursue legislation against all forms of hate crimes, including those directed against people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, and inter-sex. Offenders must pay compensation to the LGBTIQ people who have suffered violence and injustice.
- f. The Green Party will end all Federal military and civilian aid to national governments whose laws result in the imprisonment or otherwise bring harm to citizens and residents based on sexual orientation, or gender identity, characteristics, and expression.
- g. The Green Party will enact a policy that the U.S. Government recognize all international marriages and legal equivalents, such as civil unions, in processing visitor and immigration visas.
- h. The Green Party would end security surveillance and covert infiltration of organizations that promote equal rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

## **6. Rights of the Disabled**

We support the full enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act to enable all people with disabilities to achieve independence and function at the highest possible level. Government should work to ensure that children with disabilities are provided with the same educational opportunities as those without disabilities.

The physically and mentally challenged are people who are differently abled from the majority, but who are nevertheless able to live independently. The mentally ill are people with serious mental problems who often need social support networks. Physically and mentally challenged people have the right to live independently in their communities. The mentally ill also have the right to live independently, circumscribed only by the limitations of their illness. These people are their own best advocates in securing their rights and for living in the social and economic mainstream.

Current Medicaid policy forces many challenged people to live in costly state-funded institutions. Excluding these people from society alienates them; excluding them from the

work force denies them the chance to use their potentials. The diminishing funds available to provide care for the growing number of the mentally ill often result in their homelessness, vagrancy and dependence on short-term crisis facilities. Lack of funding also increases the necessity of placing them in long-term, locked facilities. The Green Party urges the government to:

- a. Increase rehabilitation funding so that persons with disabilities can pursue education and training to reach their highest potential. The differently abled should participate fully in the allocation decisions of state rehabilitation departments' funds.
- b. Aggressively implement the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- c. Fund in-home support services to allow the differently abled to hire personal care attendants while remaining at home.
- d. Allocate adequate funding to support community-based programs that provide out-patient medical services, case management services and counseling programs. We should provide a residential setting within the community for those who do not need institutional care but who are unable to live independently.
- e. Make it easier for the chronically mentally ill to apply for and receive Supplemental Security Income.
- f. Mainstream the differently abled. Increase teacher training in regard to the needs of differently abled students.
- g. Discourage stereotyping of the mentally and physically challenged by the entertainment industry and the media.
- h. Fund programs to increase public sensitivity to the needs of the mentally ill and differently abled.

## **7. Religious Freedom and Secular Equality**

The United States Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of religion. We affirm the right of each individual to the exercise of conscience and religion, while maintaining the constitutionally mandated separation of government and religion. We believe that federal, state, and local governments must remain neutral regarding religion.

We call for:

- a. Ending discriminatory federal, state, and local laws against particular religious beliefs, and non-belief. The U.S. Constitution states that there shall be no religious test for public office. This requirement should apply to oaths (or affirmations) for holding public office at any level, employment at all government levels, oaths for witnesses in courts, oaths for jury membership, and the oath for citizenship.

- b. Prosecution of hate crimes based on religious affiliation or practice.
- c. Elimination of displays of religious symbols, monuments, or statements on government buildings, property, websites, money, or documents.
- d. Restoration of the Pledge of Allegiance to its pre-1954 version, eliminating the politically motivated addition of "under God."
- e. Ending faith-based initiatives and charitable choice programs, whereby public funds are used to support religious organizations that do not adhere to specified guidelines and standards, including anti-discrimination laws.
- f. Ending school vouchers whereby public money pays for students in religious schools.
- g. Ending governmental use of the doctrines of specific religions to define the nature of family, marriage, and the type and character of personal relationships between consenting adults.
- h. Ending religiously based curricula in government-funded public schools.
- i. Ending the use of religion as a justification to deny children necessary medical care or subject them to physical and emotional abuse.
- j. Ending the use of religion by government to define the role and rights of women in our society.
- k. Revocation of the Congressional charter of the Boy Scouts of America. Any private organization that practices bigotry against certain religious beliefs and classes of people should not have a Congressional endorsement or access to public property and funds.

## 8. Youth Rights

All human beings have the right to a life that will let them achieve their full potential. Young people are one of the least protected classes of human beings, yet they represent our future. We must ensure they have an upbringing that allows them to take their place as functioning, productive, and self-actualized members of their community.

- a. Youth are not the property of their parents or guardians, but are under their care and guidance.
- b. Youth have the right to survive by being provided adequate food, shelter and comprehensive health care, including prenatal care for mothers.
- c. Youth have the right to be protected from abuse, harmful drugs, violence, environmental hazards, neglect, and exploitation.

- d. Youth have the right to develop in a safe and nurturing early environment provided by affordable childcare and pre-school preparation.
- e. Youth have the right to an education that is stimulating, relevant, engaging, and that fosters their natural desire to learn.
- f. Young people's creative potential should be encouraged to the greatest extent possible.
- g. Young people should have input into the direction and pace of their own education, including input into the operation of their educational institutions.
- h. Young people should be provided with education regarding their own and others' sexuality at the earliest appropriate time.
- i. Young people should be provided the opportunity to express themselves in their own media, including television, radio, films and the Internet. Young people should also be given skills in analyzing commercial media.
- j. Young people should be kept free from coercive advertising at their educational institutions.

## **9. GI and Veterans' Rights**

Support for men and women in the armed forces must go far beyond the rhetoric used to discredit the peace movement in the U.S. today. We believe that the ill-advised and illegal actions of the U.S. administration have unnecessarily put our troops in harm's way. We further believe that the dangerous burden of fighting the unnecessary war in Iraq, and the wars that may follow, due to the administration's overly narrow and militaristic response to terrorism is disproportionately borne by families of lesser means. Those who are required to carry out militaristic policies, often with great hardship to themselves, their families, and even the risk of their lives, deserve our respect and our commitment to adequate compensation and benefits.

Our first priority in foreign policy considerations is to creating a future without war. We are committed that future generations not face the separations and sacrifices of war.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Increase the current pay levels, including monthly combat pay, imminent danger pay and family separation allowances for those risking their lives in combat zones.
- b. Provide better care for the wounded, sick and injured soldiers. Restore full funding for veterans' health programs. Ensure that the Pentagon takes all steps necessary to fully diagnose and treat the physical and mental health conditions resulting from service in combat zones, including post-traumatic stress disorder. Support increased funding for additional clinics to provide services which now are too often delayed or denied

throughout the Veterans Affairs system because of over crowding and budget constraints.

- c. Ensure that all pre-deployment physicals are completed within the standard allotted time period, and that medical follow-ups are routinely given to all soldiers.
- d. Honor all laws concerning time limits on deployments.
- e. Ensure a smooth transition from active military service to civilian life by providing counseling, housing, emergency management, job protection and other support systems.
- f. Many of those U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen who served during U.S. Wars in the past two decades have been exposed to nuclear, chemical and possibly biological warfare agents. We insist that the Veterans Administration not ignore the suffering they have experienced since coming home from the war. The Congress should fund and the VA should implement a comprehensive program to survey Vets and the impacts of Gulf War Syndrome on them and their families and to provide the best possible medical treatment available to minimize the suffering of these men and women and their families.
- g. Veterans of the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are being unfairly discharged from the service with PTSD and other injuries caused by stress, trauma and head injuries, under trumped-up behavioral charges, as a means of military budget cost-cutting. As Greens we insist that all U.S. combatants are entitled to medical and psychiatric health care by the VA, after serving any time in a combat zones. Service members serving in combat zones are subjected to assorted variations of permanent physical and mental damage and are entitled to treatment by the Veterans Administration. This nation has a moral obligation to provide health care services and disability entitlements to its veterans. We support funding for additional clinics to provide services which now are too often delayed or denied because of over-crowding and budget constraints throughout the VA system.
- h. Provide recognized, independent veteran organizations with access to military personnel to ensure they are being informed of their rights, including those who are hospitalized due to service related injuries or illnesses.
- i. Establish a panel of independent medical doctors to examine and oversee the military policies regarding forced vaccinations and shots, especially with experimental drugs. Insist that the military halt the practice of testing experimental medicines and inoculations on service members without their consent.
- j. Enact a new GI Bill, similar to the one that began after World War II and ended in 1981, to provide tuition grants for four years of college or other educational opportunities, low-interest loans for housing or business start-ups, and free medical

care for military personnel and their families for ten years following separation from the armed forces.

- k. Support a transparent and democratic conscientious objection process free of harassment, imprisonment, or deployment to war zones for conscientious objectors. Defend the right of individuals in the military service to modify or completely separate from military involvement because of conscientious objection.

## 10. Consumer Protection

The Green Party supports strong consumer protections against fraud, dangerous products, usury, corporate greed and rip-offs.

We believe that prevention and justice are at the heart of consumer protection. Millions of lives will be saved or lost depending on the strength of our consumer protection laws. We aim to stop corporations and others from defrauding consumers or endangering them with defective products or negligence. We stand with consumers, who have been injured or defrauded by corporations and others, and support their efforts to redress the wrongs done to them. We stand with whistleblowers, who are often the public's best protection against corporate crime, fraud and waste.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Strengthen product safety standards and enforcement for a variety of products, including food, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals and airplanes.
- b. Restore state health, safety, and consumer protection laws by striking federal preemptions that weaken state law.
- c. Preserve and expand product labeling requirements to ensure that consumers are informed about the origin, ingredients and ecological life cycle of all products, including animal testing and the product's organic, recycled and genetically-engineered content. Include information about the nutritional value and the vegetarian or vegan status of food products.
- d. Prohibit corporations from concealing information about public health, labor conditions or environmental safety via protective orders or confidential settlements.
- e. Expand class action rights against manufacturers of unsafe products and practices, and strengthen the civil justice system and supply the resources necessary to bring to justice to those corporations that injure innocent consumers.
- f. Protect whistle blowers against demotion, job loss, and other forms of retaliation.
- g. Oppose "tort reform" that undermines consumers' ability to seek redress, and "medical malpractice reform" that relieves negligent doctors of responsibility for injuring or killing their patients.

- h. Grant consumers the right to limit collection and secondary use of personal information by any commercial entity.
- i. Prohibit lenders and credit card companies from charging more than 12% annual interest, indexed for inflation, along with broad protections against unwarranted fees and other abusive terms.
- j. Prohibit the widespread practice of price gouging against women and the poor.
- k. Repeal the misnamed Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005 in order to restore Chapter 7 bankruptcy as a viable final safety net for consumers caught by health crises, unaffordable mortgages, credit card debts and student loans.
- l. Ban the use of mandatory arbitration clauses in consumer contracts, which companies use to shunt consumers into anti-consumer and unfair dispute resolution processes.
- m. Establish new independent government consumer advocacy agencies to protect the interests of consumers, and restore the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs.
- n. Support policies to encourage citizens, taxpayers, ratepayers and consumers to form Citizens Utility Boards to advocate for the public interest.

## **11. Adoptee Rights**

Due to current laws millions of adults that were adopted as children are now being denied access to vital records regarding their births. This is a basic human right that the Green Party should be committed to help in abolishing the secrets and lies that surround many adoptions around the world by creating necessary transparency between adoptees, their mothers and adoptive parents.

Reform items include the following:

- a. Immediate and direct access to all identifying birth, hospital, foster care and adoption agency records and files concerning the adult adoptee (including the original adoption plans and any contracts that pertain to the adoptee or in which they are mentioned) to assist with researching their genealogy, medical history and the truth regarding the circumstances surrounding their adoptions and, if applicable, their time in foster care.
- b. Strict financial penalties need to be enforced when birth/adoption records have been lost or destroyed while under the care of agencies, hospitals, lawyers, etc. that have assumed the responsibility of storing these vital records.
- c. Full reparations for historical injustices in adoption.

## B. Environmental Justice

The Green Party supports a holistic approach to justice, recognizing that environmental justice, social justice and economic justice depend on and support each other. We believe that no one — including people of color and the poor — should be poisoned nor subjected to harmful levels of toxic chemicals and that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the pollution from industrial, governmental and commercial sources or policies. Across the United States, the poor and people of color do suffer disproportionately from environmental hazards in the workplace, at home, and in their communities. Inadequate environmental laws, lax enforcement, and weak penalties for environmental violations undermine environmental integrity, public health and civil rights.

Environmental justice is the crossroads of environmental activism and the civil rights movement. It is founded on two fundamental beliefs: that all people have the right to live, work, learn, and play in safe and healthful environments; and that people have the right to influence decisions that affect environmental quality in their communities.

We believe that government must ensure the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. To accomplish this, we unconditionally support implementation of the principle of environmental justice in our practices, policies and laws across the nation.

We recommend the following actions:

1. Make "pollution prevention" the preferred strategy for dealing with environmental justice issues, through eliminating environmental threats before they occur and considering cumulative environmental impacts when evaluating risk.
2. Uphold the precautionary principle, requiring polluters to bear the burden of proof in demonstrating the safety of their practices. Expand the application of the precautionary principle from chemicals and health to land use, waste, energy, food policy and local economic development.
3. Expand the public trust doctrine, which holds that government's role is to protect the commons, to include the domains of public health and protection of the natural environment.
4. Promote programs, policies, and legislation that build the capacity to identify disproportionate or discriminatory siting of polluting or toxic facilities. Assure non-discriminatory compliance with all environmental, health and safety laws to guarantee equal protection.
5. Facilitate procedural justice, ensuring the public's right to know. Ensure rules and regulations are transparent to help communities employ their rights and participate in

decision-making. Provide information in languages appropriate to the affected communities.

6. Enforce corrective justice, ensuring the rights of communities and local agencies to seek judicial redress. Communities and local agencies must not be required to show or prove "intent to discriminate" to achieve redress for problems of disproportionate and/or racist environmental impacts.
7. Target precautionary and corrective justice actions and resources in communities with the highest concentrations of environmental hazards and in communities lacking socioeconomic resources.
8. Support, enforce and strengthen the National Environmental Policy Act.

### **C. Economic Justice / Social Safety Net**

The passage of the 1996 Welfare Act by Congress and its signing by the President confronts us with hard choices. Democrats and Republicans seem to be saying the country cannot afford to care for children and poor mothers. In ending over fifty years of federal policy guaranteeing cash assistance for poor children, Congress has set in motion a radical experiment that will have a profound impact on the lives of the weakest members of our society. How will state, city and county governments, local communities, businesses and religious institutions — all of us — respond?

We have a special responsibility to the health and wellbeing of the young. Yet we see the federal safety net being removed and replaced with limited and potentially harsh state welfare programs. How will social services be adequately provided if local resources are already stretched thin?

We believe our community priorities must first protect the young and helpless. Yet how will state legislatures and agencies, under pressure from more powerful interests, react? We believe local decision-making is important, but we realize, as we learned during the civil rights era, that strict federal standards must guide state actions in providing basic protections. As the richest nation in history, we should not condemn millions of children to a life of poverty, while corporate welfare is increased to historic highs.

The Green Party opposes the privatization of Social Security. It is critical that the public protections of Social Security are not privatized and subjected to increased risk. The bottom 20% of American senior citizens get roughly 80% of their income from Social Security, and without Social Security, nearly 70% of black elderly and 60% of Latino elderly households would be in poverty.

### **D. Welfare: A Commitment to Ending Poverty**

An unjust society is an unsustainable society. When communities are stressed by poverty, violence and despair, our ability to meet the challenges of the post industrial age are

critically impaired. A holistic, future-focused perspective on how we distribute resources in this country would consider the effects of such distribution not just on our present needs, but on the seventh generation to come.

It is time for a radical shift in our attitude toward support for families, children, the poor and the disabled. Such support must not be given grudgingly; it is the right of those presently in need and an investment in our future. We must take an uncompromising position that the care and nurture of children, elders and the disabled are essential to a healthy, peaceful, and sustainable society. We should recognize that the work of their caregivers is of social and economic value, and reward it accordingly. Ensuring that children and their caregivers have access to an adequate, secure standard of living should form the cornerstone of our economic priorities. Only then can we hope to build our future on a foundation of healthy, educated children who are raised in an atmosphere of love and security.

- a. All people have a right to food, housing, medical care, jobs that pay a living wage, education, and support in times of hardship.
- b. Work performed outside the monetary system has inherent social and economic value, and is essential to a healthy, sustainable economy and peaceful communities. Such work includes: child and elder care; homemaking; voluntary community service; continuing education; participating in government; and the arts.
- c. We call for restoration of a federally funded entitlement program to support children, families, the unemployed, elderly and disabled, with no time limit on benefits.
- d. This program should be funded through the existing welfare budget, reductions in military spending and corporate subsidies, and a fair, progressive income tax.
- e. We call for a graduated supplemental income, or negative income tax, that would maintain all individual adult incomes above the poverty level, regardless of employment or marital status.
- f. We advocate reinvesting a significant portion of the military budget into family support, living-wage job development, and work training programs. Publicly funded work training and education programs should have a goal of increasing employment options at finding living-wage jobs.
- g. We support public funding for the development of living-wage jobs in community and environmental service. For example, environmental clean-up, recycling, sustainable agriculture and food production, sustainable forest management, repair and maintenance of public facilities, neighborhood-based public safety, aides in schools, libraries and childcare centers, and construction and renovation of energy-efficient housing. We oppose enterprise zone giveaways, which benefit corporations more than inner-city communities.

- h. The accumulation of individual wealth in the U.S. has reached grossly unbalanced proportions. It is clear that we cannot rely on the rich to regulate their profit-making excesses for the good of society through "trickle-down economics." We must take aggressive steps to restore a fair distribution of income. We support tax incentives for businesses that apply fair employee wage distribution standards, and income tax policies that restrict the accumulation of excessive individual wealth.
- i. Forcing welfare recipients to accept jobs that pay wages below a living wage drives wages down and exploits workers for private profit at public expense. We reject workfare as being a form of indentured servitude.
- j. Corporations receiving public subsidies must provide jobs that pay a living wage, observe basic workers' rights, and agree to affirmative action policies.

## **E. Education and the Arts**

### **1. Education**

The Green Party supports equal access to high-quality education, and sharp increases in financial aid for college students.

A great challenge facing the people of the United States is to educate ourselves to build a just, sustainable, humane and democratic future, and to become responsible and effective citizens of the local and global communities we share. Greens believe every child deserves a public education that fosters critical and holistic thought, and provides the breadth and depth of learning necessary to become an active citizen and a constructive member of our society. We do not believe our public school system, as it presently operates, helps us reach that goal.

The Green Party is strongly opposed to the dissolution of public schools and the privatization of education. We believe that the best educational experience is guaranteed by the democratic empowerment of organized students, their parents and communities along with organized teachers.

We must stop disinvestment in education and instead put it at the top of our social and economic agenda. Effective schools have sufficient resources. Too many of our teachers are overworked, underpaid, and starved of key materials. We also must be more generous to our schools so that our children will learn what generosity is, and know enough to be able to be generous to us in return.

Greens believe in education, not indoctrination. We do not think that schools should turn our children into servile students, employees, consumers or citizens. We believe it is very important to teach our children how to ask good questions.

Unfortunately, we often expect too little from our students, teachers and schools. We must teach our children and teenagers to be leaders, and challenge them with great works of literature, economics, philosophy, history, music, and the arts.

We also call attention to the results of a quarter century of corporate funding from the likes of the Bradley and Wal-Mart Family Foundations and a decade of No Child Left Behind — a vast, well-endowed and lucrative sector which seeks to dismantle, privatize, or militarize public education and destroy teachers unions. Regimes of high-stakes standardized testing and the wholesale diversion of resources away from public schools are provoking crises for which the bipartisan corporate consensus recommends school closings, dissolution of entire school districts and replacement by unaccountable, profit-based charter schools. The Green Party

is unalterably opposed to the dissolution of public schools and the privatization of education.

The Green Party views learning as a lifelong and life-affirming process to which all people should have access. We cannot state more forcefully our belief that in learning, and openness to learning, we find the foundation of our Platform.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Eliminate gross inequalities in school funding. Federal policy on education should act principally to provide equal access to a quality education.
- b. Provide free college tuition to all qualified students at public universities and vocational schools. It's time to forgive all student and parent loans taken out to finance post-secondary and vocational education.
- c. Oppose the administration of public schools by private, for-profit entities.
- d. Increase funding for after-school and daycare programs.
- e. Promote a diverse set of educational opportunities, including bi-lingual education, continuing education, job retraining, distance learning, mentoring and apprenticeship programs.
- f. Give K-12 classroom teachers professional status and salaries commensurate with advanced education, training and responsibility.
- g. Teach non-violent conflict resolution and humane education at all levels of education.
- h. Prohibit advertising to children in schools. Corporations should not be allowed to use the schools as vehicles for commercial advertising or corporate propaganda.

- i. Provide healthy school meals that are rich in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber, and offer plant-based vegetarian options. Support Farm-to-School programs that provide food from local family farms and educational opportunities.
- j. Ban the sale of soda pop and junk food in schools. Junk food is defined as food or beverages that are relatively high in saturated or trans fat, added sugars or salt, and relatively low in vitamins, minerals, protein and fiber.
- k. Oppose military and corporate control over the priorities and topics of university academic research.
- l. Expand opportunities for universal higher education and life-long learning.
- m. Make student loans available to all college students, with forgiveness for graduates who choose public service occupations.
- n. Repeal the No Child Left Behind Act.
- o. Include a vigorous and engrossing civics curriculum in later elementary and secondary schools, to teach students to be active citizens.
- p. Encourage parental responsibility by supporting parenting, and increasing opportunities for parents to be as involved as possible in their children's education. Values start with parents. Teaching human sexuality is a parental and school responsibility.
- q. Expand arts education and physical education opportunities at school.
- r. Recognize the viable alternative of home-based education.
- s. Oppose efforts to restrict the teaching of scientific information and the portrayal of religious belief as fact.
- t. Provide adequate academic and vocational education and training to prisoners.
- u. We urge that our nation amend its "binding declaration" with respect to the "Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict" to join the rest of the world in setting 18 as the absolute minimum age for military recruitment.
- v. No person should be permitted to sign away eight years of their life to the armed forces, without full written disclosure of what is expected of them and what they can expect in return from the government. We demand that the practice of deceiving prospective service recruits about the truth of their service contract be recognized as a fraudulent practice and sufficient grounds for revoking an enlistment contract. Current practices holding individuals legally to all the terms of their military service contract should also apply to the government.

- w. We demand an end to the militarization of our schools. JROTC programs are an expensive drain on our limited educational resources and a diversion from their important mission to prepare our young to assume their role in a peaceful tomorrow. ASVAB testing is being used to mine public school student bodies for data to support military recruiting. Forbid military access to student records. The Pentagon's Recruitment Command is misdirecting public tax dollars on manipulative campaigns that prey on our young. We insist that local education authorities stand up to these destructive practices.

## 2. The Arts

Freedom of artistic expression is a fundamental right and a key element in empowering communities, and in moving us toward sustainability and respect for diversity. Artists can create in ways that foster healthy, non-alienating relationships between people and their daily environments, communities, and the Earth. This can include both artists whose themes advocate compassion, nurturance, or cooperation; and artists whose creations unmask the often-obscure connections between various forms of violence, domination, and oppression, or effectively criticize aspects of the very community that supports their artistic activity. The arts can only perform their social function if they are completely free from outside control.

The Green Party supports:

- a. Alternative, community-based systems treating neither the artwork nor the artist as a commodity.
- b. Eliminating all laws that seek to restrict or censor artistic expression, including the withholding of government funds for political or moral content.
- c. Increased funding for the arts appropriate to their essential social role at local, state and federal levels of government.
- d. Community-funded programs employing local artists to enrich their communities through public art programs, including public performances, exhibitions, murals on public buildings, design or re-design of parks and public areas, storytelling and poetry reading, and publication.
- e. The establishment of non-profit public forums for local artists to display their talents and creations. Research, public dialogue, and trial experiments to develop alternative systems for the valuation and exchange of artworks and for the financial support of artists. Some examples include community subscriber support groups, artwork rental busts, cooperative support systems among artists, legal or financial incentives to donate to the arts or to donate artworks to public museums.
- f. Responsible choices of non-toxic, renewable, or recyclable materials. Funding sources not connected with social injustice or environmental destruction.

- g. Education programs in the community that will energize the creativity of every community member from the youngest to the oldest, including neglected groups such as teenagers, senior citizens, prisoners, immigrants, and drug addicts. These programs would provide materials and access to interested, qualified arts educators for every member of the community who demonstrates an interest.
- h. Funding and staffing to incorporate arts education into every school curriculum. We encourage local artists and the community to contribute time, experience, and resources to these efforts.
- i. Diversity in arts education in the schools including age-specific hands-on activities and appreciative theoretical approaches, exposure to the arts of various cultures and stylistic traditions, and experiences with a variety of media, techniques and contents.
- j. The integration of the arts and artistic teaching methods into other areas of the curriculum to promote a holistic perspective.

## **F. Health Care**

The Green Party supports single-payer universal health care and preventive care for all. We believe that health care is a right, not a privilege.

Our current health care system lets tens of thousands of people die each year by excluding them from adequate care, while its exorbitant costs are crippling our economy. The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world without a national health care system.

Under a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health care system, the administrative waste of private insurance corporations would be redirected to patient care. If the United States were to shift to a system of universal coverage and a single payer plan, as in Canada and many European countries, the savings in administrative costs would be more than enough to offset the cost of additional care. Expenses for businesses currently providing coverage would be reduced, while state and local governments would pay less because they would receive reimbursement for services provided to the previously uninsured, and because public programs would cease to be the "dumping ground" for high-risk patients and those rejected by health maintenance organizations (HMOs) when they become disabled and unemployed. In addition, people would gain the peace of mind in knowing that they have health care they need. No longer would people have to worry about the prospect of financial ruin if they become seriously ill, are laid off their jobs, or are injured in an accident.

The Green Party supports a wide range of health care services, including conventional medicine, as well as the teaching, funding and practice of complementary, integrative and licensed alternative health care approaches.

Greens recognize that our own health is also intimately tied to the health of our communities and environment. To improve our own health, we must improve the quality of our air, water and food and the health of our workplaces, homes and schools.

The Green Party unequivocally supports a woman's right to reproductive choice, no matter her marital status or age, and that contraception and safe, legal abortion procedures be available on demand and be included in all health insurance coverage in the U.S., as well as free of charge in any state where a woman's income falls below the poverty level. [See section A.1. Women's Rights in this chapter]

We recommend the following actions:

### **1. Single-Payer Health Care**

Enact a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health plan that will provide the following with no increase in cost:

- a. A publicly funded health care insurance program, administered at the state and local levels, with comprehensive lifetime benefits, including dental, vision, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, medication coverage, and hospice and long-term care;
- b. Participation of all licensed and/or certified health providers, subject to standards of practice in their field, with the freedom of patients to choose the type of health care provider from a wide range of health care choices, and with decision-making in the hands of patients and their health providers, not insurance companies;
- c. Portability of coverage regardless of geographical location or employment;
- d. Cost controls via streamlined administration, national fee schedules, bulk purchases of drugs and medical equipment, coordination of capital expenditures and publicly negotiated prices of medications;
- e. Primary and preventive care as priorities, including wellness education about diet, nutrition and exercise; holistic health; and medical marijuana.
- f. More comprehensive services for those who have special needs, including the mentally ill, the differently abled and those who are terminally ill;
- g. A mental health care system that safeguards human dignity, respects individual autonomy, and protects informed consent;
- h. Greatly reduced paperwork for both patients and providers;
- i. Fair and full reimbursement to providers for their services;
- j. Hospitals that can afford safe and adequate staffing levels of registered nurses;

- k. Establishment of national, state, and local health policy boards consisting of health consumers and providers to oversee and evaluate the performance of the system, ensure access to care, and help determine research priorities; and
- l. Establishment of a National Health Trust Fund that would channel all current Federal payments for health care programs directly into the Fund, in addition to employees' health premium payments.

## 2. AIDS / HIV

The Green Party calls for comprehensive, humane, and competent care of all people with AIDS/HIV.

An all-out campaign must be waged against AIDS/ HIV and other blood-borne diseases such as hepatitis. The AIDS epidemic has not been adequately addressed at the local, state, federal, or international levels. All people in all countries, including those with AIDS/ HIV, have a right to medical care, protection from discrimination, and confidentiality. Drug corporations have a strong profit motivation to make this disease a manageable one (like diabetes) with guaranteed sales of very expensive drugs, in the billions of dollars every year. Drug companies have not emphasized research that targets a cure. While new drugs have dramatically saved lives, many have side effects so debilitating that the quality of life is poor, if not intolerable during the extended lifetime of the patient. But even these need to be produced generically to stop the devastation resulting from corporate refusal to provide these drugs to the millions dying throughout the world who cannot afford these basic lifesaving drugs. Drug researchers should have a cure for AIDS as their ultimate goal.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Increased funding for AIDS education and patient care.
- b. Increased funding for comprehensive sex education that includes AIDS education.
- c. Increased funding for research focusing on a cure, methods of prevention, and on bolstering the immune system.
- d. Improved technology, facilities, laboratories, researchers, staff and personnel to cure AIDS/HIV. A "Manhattan Project" for a cure is required.
- e. Complete sharing of information among researchers, funding agencies (including corporations), and the public on AIDS/HIV before awarding the next research grant.
- f. More research into better methods of prevention of HIV infection. While we support condom use, better condoms are also required. We support more vaccine research as well as research on prevention methods such as microbicides. People must be provided the means and support to protect themselves from all sexually transmitted diseases.

- g. Equal access to AIDS education, treatment and medications for all affected. Accordingly, funding and accountability should be increased.
- h. Allowing all prisoners affected with AIDS/HIV in all countries to have the same access as free citizens to education, treatment, preventive measures (including condom use), and medical care.
- i. A uniform international definition of AIDS.
- j. Protecting the confidentiality of all people diagnosed with AIDS/HIV or tested for HIV.
- k. More careful and timely approval of effective AIDS drugs by the FDA.
- l. Production of affordable and available versions of patented medicines in all countries.
- m. Targeting the young for age-appropriate education about AIDS/HIV and appropriate methods of prevention. We support sex education and the distribution of condoms in schools.
- n. Prevention awareness and access to condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS. We condemn HIV-related discrimination.
- o. Make drug treatment and other programs available for all addicts who seek help.
- p. Expand clinical trials for treatments and vaccines.
- q. Speed-up the FDA drug approval process.
- r. Providing housing for homeless and poor people with AIDS/HIV.
- s. Providing treatment for homeless people with AIDS/ HIV.
- t. Support for needle exchange programs and for programs to help drug addicts.
- u. No mandatory screening for AIDS/HIV; anonymous screening must be available.
- v. Lifting the ban prohibiting HIV positive people from entering the U.S. as visitors or as immigrants.

## **G. Labor**

The right to organize unions, bargain freely and strike when necessary is being destroyed by employers and their representatives in government. Today, nearly one out of ten workers involved in union organizing drives is illegally fired by employers who wage a campaign of fear, threats, and slick propaganda to keep workers from exercising a genuinely free choice.

And as union membership falls, so do the wages of all working people, union and non-union alike. We support efforts to overcome these legal handicaps, especially in the South

and Southwest where the laws are most hostile. We also must dedicate ourselves to fighting for a complete overhaul of this country's labor laws.

1. The Green Party supports the irreducible right of working people, without hindrance, to form a union and to bargain collectively with their employer. This right was guaranteed under the National Labor Relations Act of 1935.
2. We support the right of workers, without penalty, to inform other workers on the premises of a union being formed. This includes advertising and recruiting.
3. It is imperative that employees enjoy workplace democracy, which includes the following:
  - a. The right to elect representatives to sit equally with management on the Board of Directors.
  - b. The right to fair and democratic elections of their own union officers.
  - c. No permanent replacement of striking workers.
  - d. No forced overtime.
  - e. Flexible working schedules so employees can arrange their own time to deal with personal and family concerns.
  - f. All workers, temporary or permanent, must be paid a living wage. The federal minimum wage for all workers should be set to at least \$15 per hour, indexed to inflation.
  - g. All workers must have health care coverage, at least half paid by employer, until the passage of universal health care.
  - h. All workers must have unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and access to a jobs search program when they are unemployed. This security applies to farm workers as well.
  - i. Minimum pensions for all workers, fully vested and portable, that do not reduce social security benefits.
  - j. Mediation as the first available solution to labor-management disputes, with an agreed-upon time limit.
  - k. New union members' right to submit a first contract to binding arbitration at the request of the union.
  - l. Labor's first right to buy out a company that is for sale or is going bankrupt, or being outsourced to another state or another country.

- m. Requiring employers who purchase or merge with other companies to honor all existing collective bargaining agreements and contracts.
  - n. Labor's right to stock ownership and oversight of the investment of its own funds in the company where it works.
4. We support the enactment of living wage laws that apply to all workers. A major consequence of this law will be the lessening of the ever-widening gap between CEOs' income and workers' pay.
  5. Agricultural and other excluded workers must be covered by federal labor laws, except where existing state laws offer more protection.
  6. We encourage cooperative ownership and management of enterprises.
  7. We support day-care service offered at every workplace when feasible, or reasonably near-by when not feasible at the workplace.
  8. Management's ability to close its workplace and move to a lower-pay locale must be circumscribed to the degree that it protects the local workforce and their job security.
  9. We support the establishment of a reduced-hour work week and at least one month of vacation per year for all workers.
  10. The ever-widening gap between rich and poor is destructive of democracy and creates an uneven playing field for economic opportunity. Public welfare that depends on hand-outs from the corporate rich reduces democracy by that same amount. Every citizen must have the leverage necessary to become a productive member of the economy and the society in which we live.
  11. All workers have a right to a safe and humane working environment. A lack of adequate enforcement of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) laws and/or insufficient standards put many workers at risk. We support the following safety policies:
    - a. Protect and enforce OSHA laws. We insist on adequate testing of equipment and funding of enforcement procedures.
    - b. Inform workers of workplace hazards. Employers have a responsibility to protect workers from those hazards.
    - c. Legislate full funding for worker safety programs at both the state and federal levels.
    - d. Insist on agricultural practices that don't endanger farm workers. Put agricultural practices under the jurisdiction of OSHA.

12. We stand firmly opposed to privatization and contracting-out of public services. A government that works for us would provide critical goods and services that should not be run for profit.

## **H. Criminal Justice**

### **OUR POSITION**

Reduce the prison population, invest in rehabilitation, and end the failed war on drugs.

The United States has the highest incarceration and recidivism rates of industrialized countries, while our nation's criminal justice system in general is too often inhumane, ineffective, and prohibitively expensive. With less than five percent of the world's population, the United States locks up nearly a quarter of the world's prisoners. Our law enforcement priorities place too much emphasis on drug-related and petty, non-violent crimes, and not enough on prosecution of corporate, white collar, and environmental crime. The majority of prisoners are serving terms for non-violent, minor property and drug addiction crimes, or violations of their conditions of parole or probation, while the poor, the under-educated and various racial and ethnic minorities are over-represented in the prison population.

The negative effects of imprisonment are far-reaching. Prisoners are isolated from their communities and often denied contact with the free world and the media. Access to educational and legal materials is in decline. Prison administrators wield total authority over their environments, diminishing procedural input from experts and censoring employee complaints.

Our priorities must include efforts to prevent violent crime and address the legitimate needs of victims, while addressing the socio-economic root causes of crime and practicing policies that prevent recidivism.

Greens oppose the increasingly widespread privatization of prisons. These prisons treat people as their product and provide far worse service than government-run prisons. Profits in privately run prisons are derived from understaffing, which severely reduces the acceptable care of inmates. Greens believe that greater, not lesser public input, oversight and control of prisons is the answer.

Greens call for an end to the "war on drugs", legalization of drugs and for treating drug abuse as a health issue. The "war on drugs" has been an ill conceived program that has wasted billions of dollars misdirecting law enforcement resources away from apprehending and prosecuting violent criminals, while crowding our prisons with non-violent drug offenders and disproportionately criminalizing youth of color.

Greens also call attention to the fact that more than forty percent of those 2.3 million locked down come from America's black one-eighth.

The Green Party recognizes that our nation's ostensibly color-blind systems of law enforcement and crime control, from police practices to prosecutorial prerogatives, to mandatory sentencing and zero-tolerance have effectively constituted an ubiquitous national policy of racially selective mass incarceration, a successor to Jim Crow as a means of social control, a policy that must be publicly discussed, widely recognized, and ultimately reversed. The nearly universal, though largely unspoken nature of this policy makes piecemeal reforms not accompanied by public discussion of the larger policy ineffective outside the context of a broad social movement.

## **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

### **1. Alternatives to Incarceration**

- a. Encourage and support positive approaches to punishment that build hope, responsibility and a sense of belonging. Prisons should be the sentence of last resort, reserved for violent criminals. Those convicted of non-violent offenses should be handled by alternative, community-based programs including halfway houses, work-furlough, community service, electronic monitoring, restitution, and rehabilitation programs.
- b. Treat substance abuse as a medical problem, not a criminal problem. Free all non-violent incarcerated prisoners of the drug war. Provide treatment to parolees and probationers who fail a drug test instead of re-incarceration.
- c. Release prisoners with diagnosed mental disorders to secure mental health treatment centers. Ensure psychological and medical care and rehabilitation services for mentally ill prisoners.
- d. Release prisoners who are too old and/or infirm to pose a threat to society to less expensive, community-based facilities.
- e. Make reduction of recidivism a primary goal of parole. Treat parole as a time of reintegration into the community, not as a continuation of sentence. Provide community reentry programs for inmates before their release. Provide access to education, addiction and psychological treatment, job training, work and housing upon their release. Provide counseling and other services to the members of a parolee's family, to help them with the changes caused by the parolee's return. Prevent unwarranted search without reasonable cause to parolees and their homes.
- f. Increase funding for rape and domestic violence prevention and education programs.
- g. Never house juvenile offenders with adults. House violent and non-violent juvenile offenders separately. Continue the education of juveniles while in custody. Substantially decrease the number of juvenile's assigned to each judge and caseworker to oversee each juvenile's placement and progress in the juvenile justice system.

## 2. Prison Conditions, Prisoner Treatment and Parolees

- a. Ensure prison conditions are humane and sanitary, including but are limited to heat, light, exercise, clothing, nutrition, libraries, possessions, and personal safety. Meet prisoners' dietary requirements. Ensure availability of psychological, drug, and medical treatment, including access to condoms and uninterrupted access to all prescribed medication. Minimize isolation of prisoners from staff and one another only as needed for safety. Make incarceration more community-based, including through increased visitor access by families. Establish and enforce prison policies that discourage racism, sexism, homophobia and rape.
- b. Ban private prisons.
- c. Implement a moratorium on prison construction. Redirect funds to alternatives to incarceration.
- d. Require that each state prison system install a rehabilitation administrator with equal authority as the highest authority.
- e. Ensure that all prisoners have the opportunity to obtain a General Education Diploma (i.e. high school equivalency diploma) and higher education. Education has proven to reduce recidivism by 10%.
- f. Ensure the First Amendment rights of prisoners, including the right to communicate with journalists, write letters, publish their own writings, and become legal experts on their own cases.
- g. Provide incarcerated individuals the right to vote by absentee ballot in the district of their domicile, and the right to vote during parole.
- h. Restore the right to hold public office to felons who have completed their prison sentence.
- i. Conduct racial and ethnic disparity impact studies for new and existing categories of offenses.

## 3. Criminal Justice Reform

- a. Abolish the death penalty.
- b. Repeal "three strikes" laws. Restore judicial discretion in sentencing. Abolish mandatory sentencing.
- c. Establish and fund programs to strengthen self-help and community action through neighborhood centers that provide legal aid, alternative dispute-resolution practices, mediated restitution, community team policing, and access to local crisis/assault care shelters.

- d. Establish elected or appointed independent civilian re-view boards with subpoena power to investigate complaints about prison guard and community police behavior. Sharply restrict police use of weapons and restraining techniques such as pepper spray, stun belts, tasers and choke holds.
- e. Prohibit property forfeiture and denial of due process for unconvicted suspects.
- f. Establish freedom on bail as a right of all defendants charged with non-violent crimes. Incorporate mental health and social services in bail agreements.
- g. Increase compensation for jurors and provide childcare for those serving jury duty.
- h. Protect victims' rights. Ensure the opportunity for victims to make victim-impact statements. Consider forms of restitution to victims.
- i. Thoughtful, carefully considered gun control such as is contained in the Brady Bill (1993). Eliminate the gun show loophole that permits sale of weapons without background checks. Extend background checks to all private sales of firearms.

#### 4. End the War on Drugs

- a. End the "war on drugs." Redirect funds presently budgeted for the "war on drugs" toward expanded research, education, counseling and treatment.
- b. Amend the Controlled Substances Act to reflect that drug use in itself is not a crime, and that persons living in the United States arrested for using drugs should not be incarcerated with those who have committed victim oriented crimes.
- c. Legalize possession, sale, and cultivation of cannabis/marijuana.
- d. Strike from the record prior felony convictions for marijuana possession, sale, or cultivation.
- e. Grant amnesty and release from confinement without any further parole or probation, those who have been incarcerated for the use, sale, or cultivation of marijuana in federal and state prisons and in county/city jails, and who otherwise are without convictions for victim oriented crimes, or who do not require treatment for abuse of hard drugs. Provide the option for drug treatment to those leaving confinement.
- f. Implement a step-by-step program to decriminalize all drugs in the United States.

#### I. Population

Humans have a unique responsibility for stewardship of the Earth. No species, especially on the upper end of the food chain, can have unchecked exponential growth without depleting the Earth's carrying capacity — human population expands at the expense of other species.

Limiting the discussion to population numbers and birthrates diverts attention from over-consumption in the industrial world and historic patterns of exploitation of developing countries. Consumption-oriented lifestyles that have evolved in the industrial world have resulted in a minority of people consuming a majority of resources. This is as significant a threat to the Earth's carrying capacity as the high birth rates in low-consumption countries.

Current global demographics demonstrate that economic wellbeing promotes low birthrates. Any discussion of population must also be a discussion of women throughout the world. There is documented evidence that the economic and social status of women is a primary factor in birthrates – when women have control over their lives, birthrates decrease. Also, a major barrier to the improvement of women's reproductive health is a lack of shared responsibility between men and women in family planning. A combination of male attitudes and cultural traditions have resulted in most men being under-educated and uninvolved in the planning of their families.

Globally, human population is increasing while food production has leveled off. When population increases faster than the economy grows, the disparity between rich and poor also increases. Higher human consumption rates and populations increase the pressure on the environment in every ecological problem area.

1. Those living in the industrialized world must end the habits of waste and over-consumption that place as much stress on the environment as does population growth in developing nations.
2. We must remove the political and economic barriers that prevent women around the world from having all the resources necessary to become skilled family planners.
3. Funds must be allocated for expanded scientific research into safer and more effective birth control techniques and devices. We demand better-than-adequate health care for women and children – especially prenatal care. [See section D. Foreign Policy in chapter I and section A.1. Women's Rights in this chapter]
4. There must be access to free birth control devices, information counseling, and clinics to all who desire them. We call for implementation of family planning education for both genders in all levels of the state school system. [See section D. Foreign Policy in chapter I and section A.1. Women's Rights in this chapter]
5. We must promote new traditions and images of men becoming fully involved in all aspects of the family planning process.

## **J. Immigration/ Emigration**

Immigration and particularly the large number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. has become a hot political issue. Laws to oppress immigrants have been proposed in the Congress. Millions of immigrants and supporters of justice for immigrants have marched

in the streets. Politicians have stirred up anti-immigrant sentiment among sections of the U.S. population.

It also must be acknowledged that the trigger for such an influx of immigrants in this country has been largely due to unfair US trade policies. If it were economically possible to provide for their families many would choose to remain in their native countries. Any immigration policy should be seen a way to address all people's humanitarian needs as we undo the damage to local communities and chart a course toward sustainable local economies.

The Green Party stands firmly for social justice for all those living in this country regardless of their immigration status. Above all, policy and law must be humane. Anything less would be inconsistent with our Green Values, and with our nation's values.

The Green Party accepts as a goal a world in which persons can freely choose to live in and work in any county he or she desires. We recognize that this would be impractical without reciprocity between nations. We seek that reciprocity as a practical goal. Countries do have a right to know the identity of persons seeking to enter. They also have the right to limit who can come in to protect public safety.

The U.S. needs a complete overhaul of its immigration laws. Our current situation has created extreme social injustice. Millions of people are living and working in the U.S. with no legal status, making them subject to extreme exploitation and abuse. Immigration raids are terrorizing the immigrant community. Families are being broken up. Employer abuses of undocumented workers are rampant.

The Green Party must consider immigration issues from an international standpoint, taking into account international labor and environmental standards, and human rights.

The following proposals may not yield perfect answers, but they provide better answers than the status quo. We must recognize that there cannot be any true solutions to the conflicts created by immigration until we are able to organize globally to overcome the power of multinational corporations, which are engaged in an unending campaign to drive down workers' living standards everywhere. International cooperation and solidarity among labor organizations, to advance the rights of labor and raise such living standards globally, are essential to combat this trend. Until the power of the multinationals is curbed, we will continue to be confronted with seemingly "no win" choices.

While working toward that goal, we propose the following immigration policies, consistent with the Ten Key Values.

## **1. Policy Reform**

The undocumented immigrants who are already residing and working in the United States, and their families, should be granted a legal status which includes the chance to become U.S. citizens. Persons should be excluded from this process only if they present a

clear and present danger to other members of our society. The level of fees required for this process should not be a burden on low-income workers. In any path to citizenship created to provide an orderly and appropriate resolution of the status of persons currently in the United States without proper documentation, we demand a recognition of past, uncredited payments into the Social Security System as part of any fees assessed for regularization of status. In regard to who should have a right to come and live and work in the U.S. we believe the following policies are fair:

- a. The Green Party calls for permanent border passes to all citizens of Mexico and Canada whose identity can be traced and verified. The "matricula consular" should be accepted as one means of proving one's identity. Work permits for citizens of Mexico and Canada must be easily obtainable, thereby decriminalizing the act of gainful employment. This action would help eliminate exploitation of undocumented persons by criminals engaged in human contraband (coyotes) and unethical employers. It would also help ensure that taxes will be paid in each corresponding nation per its laws. These measures will also help temporary residents from Mexico and Canada to secure driving privileges and liability insurance.
- b. All persons fleeing political, racial, religious, or other types of persecution must be welcomed and given permanent resident status. The history of arbitrary denial of political asylum claims must be ended. Particular attention should be given to those minorities who are political exiles and refugees and those whose lives would be at risk if asylum is not granted.
- c. Family reunification must be a priority in accepting applications for permanent residency. The years of waiting that families are currently put through must be ended.
- d. Permanent residency should not be denied based on political views, racial or national origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or any other arbitrary basis.
- e. There are many countries in the world where the economic policies and military actions of the U.S. government or U.S. based corporations have caused extreme hardships. The peoples of these countries deserve special consideration if they wish to come to the U.S. to escape intolerable conditions created by our government or U.S. corporations.
- f. We must keep faith with our commitment to the United Nations, to assist in the resettlement, including to our own country, of refugees currently stranded in refugee camps in other parts of the world.
- g. All those who are issued work permits must have the option to come and go from the U.S. as they desire. They must also have the option of remaining in the U.S. and becoming U.S. Citizens.

## 2. Interim Measures

Recognizing that a just reform of immigration policy may take some time, the Green Party supports:

- a. Measures to allow undocumented immigrants to obtain drivers licenses if they can prove their identity and pass the required tests. This will improve road safety and allow the undocumented who are driving in any case to obtain insurance.
- b. Measures to give legal status to undocumented immigrants who graduate from high school in the U.S. and who are otherwise qualified, to allow them to attend colleges and universities on an equal basis with other high school graduates. The Green Party is opposed to efforts to force undocumented youth into becoming cannon fodder for the U.S. military as the price for legal status.
- c. Reduce wait lists and make the system work more efficiently: current numeric caps on immigrant visas must be increased. The current system of quotas and preferences has to be thoroughly and realistically reformed. Current backlogs must be brought up to date as soon as possible. Wait times for processing and resolving immigration benefit applications should be reduced to no more than six months. Pre-1996 screening criteria for legal permanent residency and citizenship applications should be restored.
- d. The understandable concern about immigrant workers competing for jobs with current citizens cannot and should not be addressed by criminalizing undocumented immigration or punishing fellow victims of U.S. corporatist policies. Instead, we must reverse these policies. Among other things, we should repeal NAFTA, CAFTA, Fast Track and other corporate globalization policies. We must stop using our tax dollars to subsidize corporate agribusiness and to promote poverty in Latin America, and start using them to help reward environmentally responsible family farmers, encourage improved infrastructure and economic conditions in Latin America, and raise labor standards, at home and abroad. Here at home, we must also promote the policies, as outlined in the Economy and Workers' Rights sections of this Platform, that can help us achieve a full employment economy at a living wage, including strictly enforcing and expanding the rights of all workers to form unions.
- e. We advocate an end to employer sanctions, which have been shown to hurt not only undocumented workers but also U.S.-born workers (especially those of color). Instead, the focus on employers must be to vigorously enforce our wage and labor laws. Instead of further victimizing the victims of corporate globalization, create real opportunities and raise labor standards for all.
- f. We oppose the provision of current law which allows local police to become agents of the immigration agency. Local policing functions should be totally separate from immigration enforcement.

- g. Greens oppose "English-only" legislation. Immigrants already have ample incentive to learn English. But when interaction with the government is limited to the English speaking, persons are put at additional risk of exploitation. The focus needs to be on providing adequate and accessible English language instruction and assistance. We advocate legislation to ensure that federal funds marked for communities to provide ESL (English as second language) training, and health and social support services to immigrants actually go to them. When funds are spent in other areas, immigrants are being deprived of benefits that they earn as productive workers in their communities. Meanwhile, courts, social service agencies, and all government agencies dealing with the public must provide trained and certified translators. Additionally, the language rights of peoples who were in this land before it became part of the U.S., including Native Americans and Mexicans in the Southwest, must be recognized and respected.
- h. We oppose the militarization of our borders, (mis)using the National Guard as border police, and building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico. This will further intensify the human rights disaster our immigration policy has become, as well as seriously harm border ecosystems. We demand an immediate end to policies designed to force undocumented border-crossers into areas where conditions dramatically increase the risk of permanent injury or death, destruction of fragile environments, and the cutting off of corridors needed by wildlife for migration within their habitat. For these reasons we specifically oppose the walling off of both traditional urban crossing areas and of wilderness areas. We also call for the immediate dismantling of the border wall. We mourn the death of those thousands of men, women and children who have died trying to cross this border, where a couple of decades ago such deaths were virtually unheard of.
- i. We must resist proposals that use illegal immigration as an excuse to put us all under further government monitoring and control by means of a national ID card or other identification or tracking systems. We also oppose the imposition of the "E-Verify" system to screen people applying for jobs. Citizen workers who have been propagandized to support "tougher" measures to identify and apprehend undocumented workers need to carefully consider what they are asking for. The same snare they want the government to use against undocumented workers can easily be used to repress them. Our government is already engaged in illegal spying and surveillance of its own citizens. It is already invading our privacy. A national ID card system is one of the hallmarks of a totalitarian government or police state. We need to repeal the Real ID Act and resist the establishment of any system that would suppress freedom to travel and require citizens and non-citizens alike to "show their papers" and reveal their private information to government monitors at every turn.
- j. We demand recognition of the sovereignty of indigenous nations whose territories cross national boundaries. These indigenous nations have the right to determine the status of their members.

- k. We demand new policies and laws that deal more effectively and humanely with the victims of illegal international trafficking in humans – primarily women and children who are bought, kidnapped, coerced, brutalized, defrauded, tricked, sold and marketed for forced sex (rape) and prostitution, with an estimated 50,000 trafficked to the U.S.
- l. We call for stiffer, more appropriate policy, structure and laws to deal with traffickers, and also demand that procedures to deport victims before the traffickers are prosecuted must be changed to allow the victims to testify against the traffickers, which plays a major role in bringing these cases to justice and helping stem the tide of this heinous crime. The victims of trafficking should have the option of permanent residence in the U.S. or return to their home countries, according to their own choice.

## **K. Housing and Homelessness**

People have a right to a home and to be secure in their tenancy. However the supply of affordable housing is not meeting the need, while in an era of increasing deregulation, many tenants are losing important legal protections.

Instead of enacting zoning laws to increase affordable housing, the trend has too often been to increase the proportion of land zoned for commercial property at the expense of residential property. Instead of providing funding to increase affordable housing, amount of funds dedicated to this purpose is decreasing. At the same time, rent control and tenant eviction protections do not exist in most jurisdictions, and where they do, they are often inadequate and under attack. State governments continue to weaken or preempt local rent control laws, while landlords who violate housing code requirements by failing to keep their property in habitable condition, are often tolerated or given lenient penalties. Housing discrimination also remains rampant against people of color, immigrants, disabled, single people, gays and lesbians, and families with children.

Compounding these concerns is the long-term stagnation of workers' real wages, which further exacerbates the housing availability and affordability crisis. At the same time those who are not housed – for example, the homeless – are often hounded, threatened, and often cannot obtain badly needed services. While increased affordable housing can help alleviate the problem of homelessness, the homeless have additional needs that go far beyond housing.

The Green Party recommends the following actions:

### **Renters/Tenants' Rights**

Guarantee tenant's rights, including: freedom from harassment and evictions without just cause; well-enforced habitability standards; strong anti-discrimination enforcement, including family protection laws and domestic partnerships; continuation of established services and amenities; the right to reasonable guest visitation; maintenance of roommate

privileges; and the right to communicate with other tenants about conditions or circumstances in their buildings.

Enact and enforce strong penalties for landlords who violate these rights.

Fund public and non-profit tenant-related counseling and legal assistance for renters.

### Rent Control

Defend and expand cities' right to enact local rent control laws, including vacancy control/recontrol, that fit the needs of their communities.

Provide for publicly elected Rent Control/Stabilization Boards for communities with local rent control laws.

### Preserve and Increase Affordable Housing Supply

Defend and expand cities' ability to enact affordable housing inclusionary ordinances that fit the needs of their communities, so that the private sector will contribute its share of affordable housing construction.

Provide funding for publicly built affordable housing, including funding for non-profit corporations that build affordable housing.

Enact zoning to promote mixed-use development along transit corridors to locate housing next to jobs and public transportation. Lower parking requirements for new multi-family development to lower cost of construction to enable greater affordability.

Regulate and limit the legal conversion of existing affordable housing into hotels, motels and short-term vacation rentals and establish and enforce laws to prevent illegal conversions.

### Fair Housing

Enforce and strengthen the federal Fair Housing Act and other federal and state fair-housing laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, familial status and national origin.

Increase funding to assist people who believe they have been victims of housing discrimination and support and fund fair housing enforcement and education across the nation. Consider establishment of an independent Fair Housing Enforcement Agency outside of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in order to improve enforcement and restore public confidence in the implementation of federal fair housing policies.

Require that communities that receive federal housing funds provide evidence that their housing policies are affirmatively furthering fair housing.

Amend the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program to increase access of eligible families to high opportunity communities, by including higher rents where necessary, improving administrative portability of vouchers across jurisdictional lines, re-establishing housing mobility programs to assist voucher-holders seeking to move to higher opportunity areas, creating strong incentives and performance goals for administering agencies, and providing incentives to recruit new landlords into the program.

Amend the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program to include fair housing requirements for site selection, affirmative marketing, and reporting of racial/ ethnic data to ensure that this program works to further fair housing goals.

Ensure that fair housing principles are emphasized in programs addressing the mortgage and financial crisis.

Revive the President's Fair Housing Council to coordinate federal activities across agencies to support fair housing.

### **Measures to Address Homelessness**

Prevent homelessness before it occurs by addressing its structural causes, through raising the income floor under the working poor, creating living-wage jobs, providing job training and education that will enable low-wage workers to obtain living-wage jobs, preserving and expanding affordable housing, providing affordable health care, ensuring sufficient mental health care and substance abuse services, availability of healthy food and providing effective, holistic assistance that connects vulnerable individuals with sources of income and essential services.

Recognize that there are multiple, related and individualized causes of homelessness, and develop solutions that address them. Maintain and expand the social services necessary to address the varied aspects of homelessness.

Move people rapidly into stable living arrangements, where they will not be under constant threat of displacement or worrying about untreated health problems or other personal difficulties. Support and encourage service integration at all levels and move beyond the shelter approach to provide supportive housing that combines accommodation and an array of necessary services, to transition people out of homelessness.

Responding creatively to provide additional transitional housing through master leasing of private apartment blocks; purchase for-profit single room occupancy hotels; and where feasible, conversion of short-term emergency shelter facilities into permanent supportive housing.

Provide the resources necessary to advocate, develop and monitor discharge practices of local hospitals, jails and foster care through a zero-tolerance policy for discharging people to the streets.

Increase employment for homeless people. Set aside a share of public-sector jobs for homeless people who are able to work. Ensure that public agencies devoted to job creation are active in providing job training and work opportunities for homeless residents. Support non-profit agencies that do the same.

Ensure that public assistance is enough to allow recipients to afford a roof over their head. Help homeless who are entitled to federal Social Security benefits and veterans' disability payments to obtain them.

### **Repeal laws that criminalize homelessness**

Involve homeless people in decision-making about short- and long-term solutions to homelessness.

Educate homeless people about their right to vote. Encourage voter registration and voter participation among homeless people.

### **III. Ecological Sustainability (2016)**

The human community is an element of the Earth community, not the other way around. All human endeavors are situated within the dynamics of the biosphere. If we wish to have sustainable institutions and enterprises, they must fit well with the processes of the Earth. The ideology of industrialism, in both capitalist and communist countries, insists that modern society lives on top of nature and should rightly use and despoil the rest of the natural world as we desire— because any loss of the ecosystems is merely an "externality" in economic thought and because any problems can be addressed later by a technological fix. We are now living through the painful consequences of that arrogant, ignorant perspective. Many of our children suffer from accumulations of mercury and other toxins in their neurological systems, environmentally related cancer is on the rise, and our air and water are increasingly polluted. Meanwhile, our ecosystems are being compromised by the spreading presence of genetically engineered organisms.

Our houses and buildings, manufacturing processes, and industrial agriculture were all designed with the assumption of an endless supply of cheap and readily available fossil fuels. Pollution and despoiling the land were not part of the thinking. The Green Party, however, is optimistic about the alternatives that now exist and that could be encouraged through tax policy and the market incentives of fuel efficiency. We also challenge the grip of the oil, automotive, and automobile insurance industries that have managed to block or roll back progress in public mass transit. The gutting of subsidies for the railroads has meant not only fewer passenger routes but also the addition of thousands of large freight trucks on our highways, decreasing public safety and increasing pollution. We are

committed to extending the greening of waste management by encouraging the spread of such practices as reduce, return, reuse, and recycle. We strongly oppose the recent attempts to roll back the federal environmental protection laws that safeguard our air, water, and soil.

The health of the life-support systems— the ecosystems on our continent — is of paramount importance. Inherent in the efficient dynamics of those ecosystems is a vital profusion of biodiversity. Therefore, the Greens call for a halt to the destruction of habitats, which are being sacrificed to unqualified economic expansion. We humans have a moral responsibility to all of our relations, many of which are facing extinction because we carelessly and permanently halt their long evolutionary journey.

The Green Party also supports the spread of organic agriculture and the careful tending of our nation's precious remaining topsoil. We support planetary efforts to slow the ever-increasing numbers of humans pressuring the ecosystems, and we especially support the reduction of consumption of the world's raw materials by the industrialized Northern Hemisphere. We are appalled by our country's withdrawal from serious efforts to limit greenhouse gases that are contributing mightily to global climate disruption. The Green Party strongly urges the United States to adopt an actively responsible position in this crisis and to take significant action to address the problem.

## **A. Climate Change**

### **OUR POSITION**

Greens want to stop runaway climate change, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions at least 40% by 2020 and 95% by 2050, over 1990 levels.

Climate change is the gravest environmental, social and economic peril that humanity has ever met. Across the world, it is causing vanishing polar ice, melting glaciers, growing deserts, stronger storms, rising oceans, less biodiversity, deepening droughts, as well as more disease, hunger, strife and human misery. It is a tragedy unfolding in slow motion.

Greenhouse gases warm the Earth by trapping heat in the atmosphere. Much of that heat is initially absorbed by the ocean, creating roughly a 30-year delay in the impact of that heat at the surface of the planet. Practically speaking, that means that the melting glaciers and expanding deserts of 2009 were the result of greenhouse gases dumped into the atmosphere in the late 1970s, when the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was below 350 parts per million (ppm). To return to a safe level of greenhouse gases in Earth's atmosphere, we must reduce atmospheric greenhouse gases as quickly as possible to levels that existed before 1980, to 350ppm carbon dioxide.

Greens support science-based policies to curb climate change. We have an ambitious plan to make drastic changes quickly to avert global catastrophe. We will expend maximum

effort to preserve a planet friendly to life as we know it by curtailing greenhouse gas emissions and actively removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

## **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

### **1. Strong International Climate Treaty**

The climate treaty reached in Paris in December, 2015 is inadequate to address the climate change crisis.

The 195 nations involved pledged to reduce greenhouse gases. The pledges are not mandatory, however. The treaty does not require the phase out of fossil fuels, and it delays higher aid levels for poorer nations until 2025.

We call for legally binding commitments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2020 and a 95% reduction by 2050 over 1990 levels. We also call for the immediate assumption of responsibility by wealthy nations to financially assist poorer countries struggling with the effects of climate change.

### **2. Economic Policy For A Safer Climate**

- a. Enact a Fee & Dividend system on fossil fuels to enable the free market to include the environmental costs of their extraction and use. These fees shall be applied as far upstream as possible, either when fuel passes from extraction to refining, distribution or consumption; or when it first enters the United States' jurisdiction. The carbon fee will initially be small, a dime per kilogram of carbon, to avoid creating a shock to the economy. The fee will be increased by 10% each year that global atmospheric carbon dioxide content is greater than 350 ppm, decreased 10% each year it's less than 300 ppm, and repealed entirely when it falls below 250 ppm.
- b. Although imported fossil fuel has no more impact on global climate change than domestic, importing petroleum and natural gas has a catastrophic impact on American foreign policy and the American economy. We will enact this same fee on imported fossil fuels a second time to give the free market an incentive to wean America off foreign oil and gas.
- c. The Green Party calls for elimination of subsidies for fossil fuels, nuclear power, biomass and waste incineration and biofuels. We must also acknowledge that the bulk of our military budget is, in fact, an indirect subsidy for oil & gas corporations.
- d. To prevent perverse incentives arising from higher carbon prices, the Green Party mandates clean fuels in addition to pricing carbon. Otherwise dirty energy sources like nuclear power, biomass and biofuels that are not subject to carbon pricing will become economically competitive.

### 3. Repay Our Climate Debt

- a. Pay for adaptation to climate change in countries with less responsibility for climate change.
- b. Provide a carbon neutral development path for those countries that can no longer be permitted to develop in the same way we did—by burning cheap fossil fuels.

### 4. More Efficiency And Conservation

- a. Adopt energy efficiency standards that reduce energy demand economy-wide by 50% over the next 20–30 years. The U.S. can make massive reductions in its energy use through a combination of conservation and efficiency measures. We don't actually need any additional power. Instead, we can and should reduce our consumption of power.
- b. Build an efficient, low cost public transportation system. The best incentive we can provide to live closer to work and reduce the use of private vehicles is to make the alternative inexpensive and convenient to use.
- c. Adopt a national zero waste policy. The less we consume and throw away, the less we will need to produce and replace.

### 5. Clean, Green Energy and Jobs

- a. Create an inclusive program to train workers for the new, clean energy economy. Focusing on both the environment and social justice, prioritize the creation of green jobs in communities of color and low-income communities.
- b. Transition to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050, with at least 80 percent achieved by 2030, using wind, solar, ocean, small-scale hydro, and geothermal power. Renewable energy is technically and economically feasible. The barriers to a renewable energy economy come from economic, political and social interests, and are not technical.
- c. End the use of nuclear power. Nuclear energy is massively polluting, dangerous, financially risky, expensive and slow to implement. Our money is better spent on wind, solar, geothermal, conservation and small-scale hydroelectric.
- d. Stop "dirty clean energy." Many of the "solutions" offered in climate legislation aren't real solutions. Biomass incineration (trees, crops, construction debris and certain types of waste), landfill gas and many types of biofuels will dump massive quantities of toxic pollutants into the air and water, and some of these energy sources produce more greenhouse gas emissions than coal. Natural gas is primarily methane, which is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. Consequently, when pipeline leakage is considered, the clean-burning characteristics of natural gas can be

lost, resulting in a fuel with climate impacts as bad as coal. Biomass and biofuels will also increase deforestation, contributing to more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

## 6. Clean, Green Agriculture

- a. Convert U.S farm and rangeland to organic practices. Chemical and industrial agriculture produces 35-50% of climate destabilizing greenhouse gases.
- b. Switch to local food production and distribution. Localized, organic food production and distribution reduce fossil fuel usage and enriches soil that sequesters more carbon dioxide.
- c. Reduce methane, nitrous oxide and other greenhouse gases by rapidly phasing out confined animal feeding operations, and encouraging a reduction in meat consumption.

## B. Energy

The United States has a high-energy-consumption economy based mainly on fossil energy. The extraction, refining, and combustion of fossil fuels have proved extremely harmful to the environment, and supplies are rapidly being depleted. Over the past century, the infrastructure of our civilization has become utterly dependent on plentiful oil, coal, and natural gas: vast land, air, and sea transportation networks; increasing dependence on imported goods; industrialized food production dependent on fertilizer and biocides; and sprawling, car-dependent neighborhoods and workplaces. Our electric grid depends on fossil fuels for two-thirds of its energy.

Dirty and dangerous energy sources have generated an unparalleled assault on the environment and human rights. In the U.S., low income communities and communities of color bear the greatest burden of health impacts due to exposure to emissions from coal and gas-fired power plants. Native American communities have been devastated by uranium mining, and the people of Appalachia watch helplessly as their ancient mountains are destroyed for coal-fired electricity. Regional and global peaks in supply are driving up costs and threatening wars and social chaos. [See section on Climate Change, above]

Since 1859 when the first commercial oil well was drilled in Pennsylvania, the global community has consumed about half what nature generated over hundreds of millions of years. Although coal is more abundant than oil, it is inherently dirtier than oil, is limited in terms of its use as a vehicle fuel, and demand is skyrocketing globally for use in electricity generation. Natural Gas is also in high demand for power production and is ultimately finite. We must plan and prepare for the end of fossil fuels now, while we still have energy available to build the cleaner, more sustainable energy infrastructure that we will soon need.

To simply substitute better energy sources in place of fossil fuels is not the answer for two main reasons. First, there are no energy sources (renewable or otherwise) capable of

supplying energy as cheaply and in such abundance as fossil fuels currently yield in the time that we need them to come online. Second, we have designed and built our infrastructure to suit the unique characteristics of oil, natural gas, and coal.

The energy transition cannot be accomplished with a minor retrofit of existing energy infrastructure. Just as our fossil fuel economy differs from the agrarian economy of 1800, the post-fossil fuel economy of 2050 will be profoundly different from all that we are familiar with now. Changes would occur if we wait for the price of fossil fuels to reflect scarcity, forcing society to adapt; however, lack of government planning will result in a transition that is chaotic, painful, destructive, and possibly not survivable.

The Green Party advocates a rapid reduction in energy consumption through energy efficiency and a decisive transition away from fossil and nuclear power toward cleaner, renewable, local energy sources. Toward these goals, we advocate:

### **1. Encourage Conservation**

Encourage conservation and a significant decrease in our energy consumption, institute national energy efficiency standards.

With five percent of the world's population, U.S. residents consume twenty-six percent of the world's energy. U.S. consumption of electricity is almost nine times greater than the average for the rest of the world. These are not sustainable levels.

- a. The U.S. must retrofit its building stock for energy efficiency. Most U.S. residents live in homes that require heat during the winter, and most are inadequately insulated. Buildings in the South require air conditioning during the summer. Fuel shortages, power outages, and energy price hikes could bring not just discomfort, but a massive increase in mortality from cold and heat. Millions of buildings can and must be super-insulated and, as much as possible, provided with alternative heat sources (passive solar, geothermal, or district heating).
- b. Energy efficiency standards similar to those in California must be adopted nationally. The energy efficiency standards adopted there in the late 1970s have resulted in overall electricity-use remaining flat over the past three decades while the population has steadily increased. During the same time period electricity use in the rest of the U.S. has climbed along with population growth.
- c. There are many different ways to increase energy efficiency and the best path for one region of the country might differ from that of another. We will need concerted effort to increase efficiency in every sector of our economy. Technologies exist that, if widely implemented, can result in huge energy savings.
- d. Cogeneration and use of waste heat to generate electricity should be encouraged.

- e. A carbon tax, which the Green Party supports, would serve as an important market incentive to increase efficiency.

## **2. Move to Renewable Sources**

Move decisively to an energy system based on solar, wind, geo-thermal, marine, and other cleaner renewable energy sources.

The development of Earth-gentle, sustainable energy sources must be a cornerstone of any plan to reduce reliance on conventional fossil fuels. The Green Party advocates clean renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, marine-based, and other cleaner renewable sources as the long-term solution.

- a. Many other solutions being pushed, including nuclear power, coal, industrial-scale biofuels, and low-grade fossil fuels such as oil shale and tar sands, create more problems than they solve.
- b. Further research with increased government support is needed into new energy storage technologies, as well as new cheaper and non-toxic photovoltaic materials and processes, and new geothermal and ocean power technologies.
- c. Policy tools to directly support the development of renewable energy sources, such as Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) and Feed-in Tariffs, should also be reviewed for effectiveness. In general, a feed-in tariff is legislation enacted by the government that requires the large electric utilities to guarantee a price for the renewably generated electricity fed into the grid. When done right, such as in Germany, this policy appears to succeed in harnessing entrepreneurial zeal.
- d. State-level financing policies like California's AB 811 can help homeowners install expensive renewable energy where the county pays the up-front cost and the system is paid for via the homeowner's property taxes.
- e. Greens support voluntary purchase of tradable renewable energy certificates; however, voluntary approaches are not sufficient.
- f. Greens support research into advanced fuels when the purpose of the research is to develop a fuel that in its full cycle does not create more problems than it solves. We support the use of hydrogen as an energy storage medium; however we oppose the use of nuclear technologies or carbon-based feedstocks for hydrogen production.
- g. We call for a ban on the construction of large-scale and inappropriately-located, hydroelectric dams.

## **3. Eliminate dirty & dangerous energy sources**

The Green Party advocates the phase-out of nuclear and coal power plants. All processes associated with nuclear power are dangerous, from the mining of uranium to the

transportation and disposal of the radioactive waste. Coal is the largest contributor to climate change with estimates as high as 80%.

The generation of nuclear waste must be halted. It is hazardous for thousands of years and there is no way to isolate it from the biosphere for the duration of its toxic life. We oppose public subsidies for nuclear power. Cost is another huge factor making it unfeasible, with each new nuclear power plant costing billions of dollars.

The Green Party calls for a formal moratorium on the construction of new nuclear power plants, the early retirement of existing nuclear power reactors, and the phase-out of technologies that use or produce nuclear waste, such as nuclear waste incinerators, food irradiators, and all uses of depleted uranium.

We call for a ban on mountaintop removal coal mining. With limited supplies and in the absence of commercially viable "clean coal" carbon sequestration, which may never be feasible, coal is neither an economically nor an environmentally sustainable solution.

We call for the cessation of development of fuels produced with polluting, energy-intensive processes or from unsustainable or toxic feed stocks, such as genetically-engineered crops, coal and waste streams contaminated with persistent toxics.

We oppose further oil and gas drilling or exploration on our nation's outer continental shelf, on our public lands, in the Rocky Mountains, and under the Great Lakes.

Due to serious negative impacts on food, soil, and water, we oppose industrial-scale biofuels production and biomass burning for electric power generation. We approve small scale distributed production under local control, such as production of biodiesel from waste oils, production of charcoal and byproducts from wood wastes or sustainably harvested wood, small scale production of ethanol from crop wastes or maize stalk sugar, or production of fuel gas for localized electricity generation from anaerobic methane digesters or charcoal gasifiers. We do not object to the utilization of fuel gases seeping from landfills, as that is one way to reduce air pollution. We support as a minimum standard the Principles for Sustainable Biomass statement signed by Clean Water Action, Environmental Defense Fund, Environmental Working Group, Friends of the Earth, Geos Institute, Greenpeace USA, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Resources Defense Council, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, Southern Environmental Law Center, Union of Concerned Scientists, The Wilderness Society, and World Wildlife Fund.

The Green Party stands for the enactment of bans on hydraulic fracturing for natural gas and oil on the local, state and federal level and stands for bans on the disposal of wastes created by the fracking industry.

#### **4. Decentralize the Grid**

Plan for decentralized, bioregional electricity generation and distribution.

Decentralized power systems are likely to be more resilient in the face of power disruptions and will cut transmission losses, assure citizens greater control of their power grids, and prevent the massive ecological and social destruction that accompanies production of electricity in mega-scale projects.

- a. We support "smart grid" upgrades. The federal government must step in to set goals and standards and to provide capital. This effort must not favor commercial utilities over municipal power districts.
- b. The Green Party supports net metering to make decentralized energy production economically viable.
- c. Greens support tax-exempt bonds to finance public ownership of utilities and to allow publicly owned utilities to finance conservation and renewable energy projects.
- d. We oppose deregulation of the energy industry.

## **5. Re-localize the Food System**

De-carbonize and re-localize the food system.

Our national industrial food system is overwhelmingly dependent upon oil and natural gas for farm-equipment fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, and the transport. It is responsible for over 12% of all greenhouse gases from human activities in the U.S. New farming methods, new farmers, and a re-localization of production and distribution are needed. These will require land reform, an investment in revitalizing rural areas and the creation of local food processing plants and storage centers. Laws and incentives affecting the food system (including food safety laws and farm subsidies) will need to be rewritten to provide preferential support for small-scale, local, low-input producers.

## **6. Electrify the Transportation System**

Our enormous investment in highways, airports, cars, buses, trucks, and aircraft is almost completely dependent on oil, and it will be significantly handicapped by higher fuel prices, and devastated by actual fuel shortages. The electrification of road-based vehicles is a must and will require at least two decades to fully deploy and we must move to Earth-gentle electricity generation to charge the vehicles. Meanwhile, existing private automobiles must be put to use more efficiently through carpooling, car-sharing, and ride-sharing networks. [See Transportation section below for more, including need for dramatic increase in CAFE or gasoline efficiency standards]

## **7. Requirements for Energy Transition**

- a. Investment: Enormous amounts of investment capital will be needed to accomplish the energy transition, much more than the promise of \$150 billion for renewable energy over ten years, and must now come from government.

- b. **Coordination:** The energy transition will be complex and comprehensive, and its various strategies will be mutually impacting. For example, efforts to redirect transport away from highways and toward rail service will need to be coordinated with manufacturers, farmers, retailers, and employers. An independent federal Energy Transition Office should track and manage the transition.
- c. **Education:** Community colleges should prepare workers for new job opportunities, e.g., sustainable food production, renewable energy installation, grid rebuilding, rail expansion, public transport construction, and home energy retrofitting. Grade school curriculum should include gardening programs in all schools and increased emphasis on energy conservation.
- d. **Public Messaging & Goal Setting:** Our leaders must instill in the nation a sense of collective struggle and of a long journey toward a clear goal. The success of a project of this scope will require public buy-in at every stage and level, including the use of language and images to continually underscore what is at stake, to foster a spirit of cooperation and willing sacrifice.
- e. **Business leaders, advertising agencies and even Hollywood must be enlisted, a quid pro quo for government bail out of banks and corporations.** Grassroots initiatives, such as the Transition Towns movement, could lead the way toward voluntary community efforts. A sophisticated, interactive, web-based program would inspire action and provide resources. Ratepayers should get full disclosure of the specific electric generating facilities used to produce their electricity.
- f. **A series of challenging yet feasible targets should be set, with the ultimate goal—complete freedom from fossil fuel dependency — to be achieved by 2050.** The federal government should take the lead by setting targets for federal facilities. Achievement of annual targets should be cause for public celebration.

#### **D. Nuclear Issues**

- 1. The Green Party recognizes that there is no such thing as nuclear waste "disposal." All six of the "low-level" nuclear waste dumps in the United States have leaked. There are no technological quick fixes that can effectively isolate nuclear waste from the biosphere for the duration of its hazardous life. Therefore, it is essential that generation of additional nuclear wastes be stopped.
- 2. The Green Party calls for the early retirement of nuclear power reactors as soon as possible (in no more than five years), and for a phase-out of other technologies that use or produce nuclear waste. These technologies include non-commercial nuclear reactors, reprocessing facilities, nuclear waste incinerators, food irradiators, and all commercial and military uses of depleted uranium.

3. Current methods of underground storage are a danger to present and future generations. Any nuclear waste management strategy must be based on waste containers being stored above ground and continuously monitored, and the containers must be retrievable and capable of being repackaged. All such strategies must also minimize the transportation of wastes.
4. The Green Party strongly opposes any shipment of high-level nuclear waste across the U.S. to the proposed Nevada waste repository at Yucca Mountain, or any other centralized facility. The Green Party believes that this proposal is part of a move to re-fire a fast-track, commercial nuclear industry by providing a means for "safe disposal." We deny there is such a thing as safe disposal of nuclear waste.
5. We propose making spent reactor fuel and other high level wastes safer by vitrification at the site where it is produced or now stored.
6. We call for cancellation of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), the nation's first weapons complex nuclear dump in southern New Mexico.
7. We call for independent, public-access radiation monitoring at all nuclear facilities
8. We support applicable environmental impact statements (EIS) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis with citizen participation at all nuclear sites.
9. We support an immediate and intensive campaign to educate the public about nuclear problems, including disposal, cleanup, and long-term dangers.
10. We oppose the export of nuclear technologies or their wastes to other nations.
11. We oppose public subsidies for nuclear power, including Price-Anderson insurance caps and stranded cost recovery bailouts. We oppose federal loan guarantees to enable the construction of a new generation of nuclear reactors.
12. We oppose the development and use of new nuclear reactors, plutonium (MOX) fuel, nuclear fuel reprocessing, nuclear fusion, uranium enrichment, and the manufacturing of new plutonium pits for a new generation of nuclear weapons.
13. We oppose the deregulation of radioactive materials and wastes, which is allowing such wastes to be recycled into consumer products and to enter municipal waste landfills and incinerators. We call for the strict regulation, tracking, monitoring, and recapturing of radioactive materials and wastes.
14. We call on the military to clean up depleted uranium contamination from testing ranges and battlefields and to fully compensate exposed veterans and civilians who have been affected by depleted uranium exposure in the U.S. and elsewhere.

## **D. Transportation**

The Green Party supports a transportation policy that emphasizes the use of mass transit and alternatives to the automobile and truck for transport. We call for major public investment in mass transportation, so that such systems are cheap or free to the public and are safe, accessible, and easily understandable to first-time users. We need ecologically sound forms of transportation that minimize pollution and maximize efficiency.

Surfaces impermeable to rainwater, polluted storm run-off; paved over or polluted wetlands, the heat island effect, air pollution, and acid rain are all directly related to a transportation system run amuck.

Massive subsidies to the auto and fossil fuel industries, as well as an unworkable approach by urban planners, maintain the auto's dominance of our cityscapes. The present-day approach of upgrading streets to accommodate increased traffic generates new traffic because access is now easier, and people will now take jobs further from their homes or purchase homes further from their jobs. Some people shift from public transit to private cars due to the trip time in cars being shorter. As patronage for public transit decreases, public transit loses funding, becomes less viable, and service deteriorates thus encouraging even more people to use their cars.

To counteract these trends and reduce auto use, the Green Party advocates the following strategies:

### **1. Pedestrians and Bicyclists**

- a. Make streets, neighborhoods and commercial districts more pedestrian friendly.
- b. Increase the greenery of streets.
- c. Utilize traffic-calming methods, where the design of streets promotes safe speeds and safe interaction with pedestrians. Create auto-free zones.
- d. Develop extensive networks of bikeways, bicycle lanes and paths. Include bike racks on all public transit.
- e. Maintain free community bicycle fleets, and provide necessary support for cyclists.

### **2. Mass Transit**

- a. Redirect resources that currently go to enhancing auto capacity into expanding human-scale transit options.
- b. Develop affordable mass transit systems that are more economical to use than private vehicles.

- c. Encourage employer subsidies of transit commuter tickets for employees, funded by government Congestion Management grants.
- d. Use existing auto infrastructure for transit expansion where possible. Light rail could be established in expressway medians through metropolitan high-density corridors.
- e. Include land use decisions in transportation issues, with consideration of the need for mass transit to have a market and be viable, and with attention paid to crosscommuting the practice of people commuting to a place where they could and should live.
- f. Expand our country's network of rail lines, including high-speed regional passenger service.
- g. Transfer ownership and operation of all intercity railroad trackage currently under control of freight railroads to responsible and adequately funded public agencies, as is done with highways, to provide for efficiency and safety of all rail traffic.

### **3. Motor Vehicles**

- a. Place a moratorium on highway widening, appropriating funds instead for mass transit and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- b. Mandate HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lanes on freeways, and lower tolls for carpools.
- c. Discourage unnecessary auto use by eliminating free parking in non-residential areas well served by mass transit, and establish preferential parking rates for HOV.
- d. Regularly increase Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards to levels which truly challenge automakers to improve the state of the art, using the fuel economy performance of vehicles worldwide for reference. Eliminate the distinction between cars and light trucks, the footprint loophole, the E85 loophole and the 8500-pound exemption. Eliminate the perverse incentives for alternative fuels that increase the nation's petroleum consumption. Enact a Fee & Dividend system on the carbon content of gasoline, Diesel fuel and E85.
- e. Enact a fuel-economy-based Federal sales tax that creates a significant incentive for people to select more efficient vehicles, and for automakers to make them available in the United States.
- f. Lead by example, using government procurement to put more high-efficiency and alternative-fuel vehicles into service.
- g. Electrify truck stops, freight terminals and loading docks. Enact and enforce anti-idling regulations. Idling engines consume nearly a billion gallons of gasoline and Diesel fuel and emit ten million tons of carbon dioxide annually (2007 data).

- h. Encourage carpooling programs, telecommuting, and other creative solutions to reduce commuter traffic congestion.
- i. Remove the most-polluting vehicles from the road by requiring every vehicle to comply with the emission standards in effect when it was manufactured before issuing or renewing its license.

#### **4. Air Travel**

- a. Make airports accessible by local transit systems.
- b. Legislate further incremental reductions in airplane noise and air pollution.
- c. Emphasize the use of light and heavy rail for freight transportation.

#### **5. Freight**

We call for incentives to get long-distance truck hauling off of our highways and on to railways. We favor the removal of any administrative impediments to efficient long-haul freight transport by rail. Time is lost when switching goods from one railroad to another, even when the trains are the same size and gauge, and this waste can be eliminated.

#### **E. Zero Waste: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.**

#### **OUR POSITION**

Greens will shift our nation toward clean production and principles of zero waste.

A waste-free society is essential to public health and the integrity and sustainability of the biosphere. Natural ecosystems are self-sustaining and generate no waste. We humans are a part of these ecosystems, and while we obtain resources from them, we have a responsibility to return only those things that can be re-absorbed without detriment. Waste is not an inevitable part of production and consumption, as it is viewed in the current economic model.

#### **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

1. Phase out all avoidable production and sale of toxic metals, persistent organic pollutants, persistent bio-accumulative toxins, synthetic petrochemicals, and halogenated chemicals. Replace them with non-toxic alternatives.
2. Make manufacturers responsible for the full life cycle of their products by requiring them to take back used products and packaging for remanufacturing, reuse, or recycling.
3. Support and implement the precautionary principle: "When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In

this context the proponent of an activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of proof. The process of applying the precautionary principle must be open, informed and democratic and must include potentially affected parties. It must also involve an examination of the full range of alternatives, including no action.”

4. Strengthen right-to-know laws so that everyone can discover what toxic or potentially toxic chemicals are used and released in their communities, and in products that they might purchase or use.
5. Hold corporations strictly liable for the consequences of the pollution they produce. We support the Citizens' Platform on Superfund, as adopted at the 1995 Communities At Risk Superfund Summit in Washington, DC. End the use of incineration as a cleanup technology, and ensure that "cleanups" don't simply relocate toxins to chemical waste dumps in poor communities of color.
6. Shut down existing waste incinerators, impose a moratorium on new waste incinerators, and phase out landfills. For all possible waste streams, we support the following strategies (in order of priority) as alternatives to incineration and landfills: (a) toxics use reduction; (b) source reduction, reuse, clean recycling or composting / digestion; or (c) neutralization, sterilization or detoxification methods where applicable.
7. Do not deregulate wastes containing toxic or radioactive contaminants significantly above background levels. They should not be allowed to be used in "beneficial use" schemes as fertilizer, "co-products," or fuels; or by "recycling" them into consumer products (including construction materials) or disposing of them as municipal waste.
8. Do not export, under any circumstances, chemicals that are prohibited in the United States. We oppose shipping of toxic, hazardous, or radioactive wastes across national borders, and the shipment of such wastes without strict regulation across any political borders. Waste should not be considered a tradable commodity under the Interstate Commerce Clause.
9. Safe, secure, above ground storage for existing nuclear waste. We oppose exporting nuclear waste to other nations.
10. Strict regulation of radioactive materials and wastes and prohibiting such wastes to be recycled into consumer products and to enter municipal waste landfills and incinerators.
11. Close, clean up and remediate at national labs devoted to nuclear energy and weapons development and operations at the Department of Energy's nuclear production sites.
12. Clean up depleted uranium contamination from testing ranges and battlefields, and provide generously compensate veterans and civilians who have been sickened by depleted uranium exposure.

13. Require independent, transparent radiation monitoring at all nuclear facilities.
14. Substitute chemical safety testing on animals with alternatives that do not use animals, wherever such alternative tests or testing strategies are available.

## **F. Clean Air and Ozone Depletion**

The strict, comprehensive protections of the Clean Air Act must be maintained and enhanced if we are to keep in place effective federal programs that deal with urban smog, toxic air pollution, acid rain, and ozone depletion. State and local clean air initiatives should advance and improve national efforts; for example, moving forward with stricter clean air and fuel efficiency standards, and with vehicle and fleet conversions.

GPUS recognizes the positive contributions for controlling ozone-destroying substances that have been made by the Montreal Protocol of 1987 and subsequent amendments thereto. Problems still exist, however. Some of the chemical replacements for CFCs also damage the ozone layer or are potent greenhouse gases. These include hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and Very Short-Lived Substances (VSLS) such as dichloromethane and other chlorine gases.

GPUS supports further research on the damaging effects of VSLS on the ozone layer and finding replacements for those causing destruction of ozone, and immediately phasing out their use. We call for updated amendments to the Montreal Protocol to keep it consistent with current scientific findings regarding threats to the ozone layer.

## **G. Land Use**

### **OUR POSITION**

Land use policies must promote sustainable development and respect ecology.

Unlimited growth on a finite planet cannot be sustained.

There is a fundamental difference between growth and development and between quantity and quality. Rather than exploiting the Earth for short-term gain, Greens believe in living in sustainable balance with it. Land use practices must be founded on stewardship of the Earth, to honor the interconnected and interdependent nature of all life, to respect ecosystems and other species, while at the same time providing for human needs in a responsible and sustainable way.

Only an economics that is based upon environmental health is sustainable.

## **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

### **Land ownership and property rights**

1. Insist that every property right has an implied responsibility to provide for the common good of people, places and the planet.
2. Encourage the formation and operation of cooperatives, non-profits, land trusts, co-housing, and other forms of communal and public interest management of land and resources.

### **Urban land use**

3. Promote livable urban environments to minimize urban sprawl. Promote urban infill with affordable housing, mass transit, schools, jobs, health care, public spaces, bicycle and walking paths, community gardens, open spaces, parks, playgrounds, and urban growth boundaries.
4. Green our cities with green belts, energy-efficient infill, distributed solar and wind generation, gray water systems, under grounding of wires and pipelines, redevelopment of brown fields, closed loop, energy-producing sewage systems, watershed protection and urban agriculture.

Restore damaged urban ecosystems.

5. Consider the carrying capacities of the bioregions in which our cities are located and attempt to match urban populations to these natural limitations.
6. Support environmental justice policies that give communities a voice in planning future development with the goal of preventing concentration of polluting industries and practices in poor and/or minority communities.

### **Rural land use**

7. Preserve and expand rural land use patterns that promote open space, healthy ecosystems, wildlife corridors and the ecologically sustainable agriculture. Protect and expand large continuous tracts of public and private land for wildlife habitat and biological diversity, to permit healthy, self-managing wildlife populations to exist in a natural state, and to promote complete ecosystems.
8. Promote livable rural communities to minimize urban migration.
9. Transition rural communities into sustainable relationships with ranching, agriculture, forestry and mining.

10. Reward farmers and ranchers for the ecosystem services they provide on private and public lands. Favor policies that promote small-scale farmers and ranchers over large-scale corporate agriculture and ranching.

### **Public Lands**

11. Repeal the General Mining Law of 1872.
12. Enact mining reforms to better balance mining with other important public land uses; provide a fair financial return to taxpayers for resources extracted, and create a fund for clean up of abandoned mines. Enact tough new environmental safeguards to protect against mining pollution, including strict curbs on mercury emissions from metal mines.
13. Eliminate public subsidies for livestock grazing on public lands. Raise grazing fees on public land to approximate fair market value.
14. Oppose the sale of any portion of our national parks, forests or coastlines. Fund and maintain public lands in a healthy and productive state. Oppose commercial privatization of the management of these lands.
15. Ensure public ownership of natural resources located on public lands. Halt federal mineral, oil and gas, and resource giveaways, "royalty holidays," and flagrant concessions to the mining, energy and timber industries on public lands.
16. Restore and remediate damaged ecosystems on public lands.
17. Protect old growth forests, ban clear cutting and ban industrial timber harvest on public lands. Minimize road building on public lands.
18. Ban indiscriminate wildlife "damage control practices" and abolish Wildlife Services.

### **H. Water**

Water is essential to all forms of life. The Green Party calls for an international declaration that water belongs to the Earth and all of its species. Water is a basic human right! The U.S. Government must lead the way in declaring water a fundamental human right and prevent efforts to privatize, export, and sell for profit a substance that is essential to all life.

We face a worldwide water crisis. According to the United Nations, more than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water. If current trends persist, by 2025 as much as two-thirds of the world's population will be living with a serious scarcity of water. Multinational corporations recognize these trends and are moving fast to monopolize water supplies around the world. They argue that privatizing water is the best way to allocate this valuable resource, and they are scheming to have water declared a human

need so that it can be commodified and sold on the open market ensuring that the allocation of water will be based on principles of scarcity and profit maximization.

We do not agree. With water sold to the highest bidder, the rich will have plenty while the poor will be left with little but polluted water. Short-term profits will preclude any concern for long term sustainability. We must stop this privatization before the infrastructures become so established that it will be impossible to avoid a disaster of epic proportions.

Governments are signing away their control over their domestic water supplies by participating in trade treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and in institutions such as the World Trade Organization. The World Bank recently adopted a policy of water privatization and full-cost water pricing.

1. We need strong national and international laws to promote conservation, reclaim polluted water systems, develop water-supply restrictions, ban toxic and pesticide dumping, control or ban corporate farming, and bring the rule of law to transnational corporations that pollute water systems. Mining and depleting the present underground aquifers must be severely restricted. Implement strong laws to promote conservation, reclaim polluted water systems, develop water-supply restrictions, ban toxics and pesticide dumping, control corporate farming, and bring the rule of law to trans-state and trans-national operations that pollute water systems
2. Greens oppose the privatization of water and demand that the U.S. government pass strong laws with effective enforcement mechanisms to assure a safe and adequate supply of water for its citizens and all life within its borders.
3. Decisions about water must be based on an ecosystems approach. Use an ecosystems/watershed approach to ensure responsible water use. All stakeholders need to participate in the planning. Environmental justice, ecological impact, and depletion of groundwater supplies need to be integrated with the ongoing process for approval of new withdrawals.

Cycles of intense drought and flooding have demonstrated the need to reorient our priorities in order to achieve a truly sustainable water policy. Over-development and poor planning have resulted in increasing rain-impermeable areas, which compounds the severity and frequency of flooding and pollution in regions downstream. We must begin to understand and apply a holistic watershed approach to managing our water resources. The principle of bioregionalism (living within the means of a region's natural resources) should give direction to future water policies.

4. Conservation must be an essential part of any water policy. Water conservation also reduces energy consumption and pollution. To conserve water, the Green Party proposes to:

- a. Mandate water efficient appliances and fixtures be used in all new construction, and promote retrofitting of older buildings.
  - b. Promote native landscaping and other drought resistant/ climate-appropriate plants, in order to reduce the need for irrigation.
  - c. Promote drip irrigation systems where irrigation is necessary.
  - d. Eliminate storm water pollution of our water resources through education of our citizens, enforcement of our laws, and holistic watershed management.
  - e. Promote storm water technologies that detain, treat, filtrate, and use storm waters near where it is collected.
  - f. Promote the appropriate reuse of the "gray" and "black" waters we produce. Use separation techniques, such as dual piping systems where pure water is used for drinking and washing, and reclaimed water is used for lawn watering and similar purposes.
  - g. Mandate pre-treatment of industrial wastes to eliminate the presence of metals, solvents, and other toxins in sewer water. This would reduce the cost of municipal treatment and encourage wastewater reuse.
  - h. Promote and maintain passive and natural systems (such as wetlands) for water and wastewater treatment where appropriate, and enforce regulations against dumping of pollutants through regional Water Quality Control Boards.
  - i. Eliminate water subsidies for corporate agribusiness. Higher water prices give agribusiness incentives to conserve.
  - j. Assist community organizations to monitor the use of local resources, and to oversee the enforcement of water quality regulations. Preserve and restore the nation's natural water features (streams, rivers, lakes, bays, wetlands and groundwater aquifers) that are vital to achieving sustainable use of water resources.
5. Set health and sustainability water quality guidelines for drinking water supported by the peer-reviewed scientific literature. Regulations are needed or need improvement, for example, for arsenic, bacteria, viruses, protozoa, fluoridation chemical species such as fluoride and fluorosilicate, water disinfection-by-products, environmental estrogens, and pharmaceuticals (medicines).
  6. Achieve a truly sustainable water policy in the light of climate change considering, for example, snow packs, aquifer recharge, rising sea levels, and available water supplies.
  7. Oppose the disproportional political influences of the petroleum, corporate agriculture, mining, timber, real estate and development industries, while working to

support family farms, open space, the protection of water quality in our rivers, conservation of watersheds, and the sustainable use and preservation of healthy forest.

8. Integrate land use with water use for urban planning decisions. Political bodies, such as municipal water authorities, need to be more inclusive in the representation of users, hydrologists, environmental health professionals, and environmental advocates in the region and address the issues affecting the regional supply and demand of the resource, as well as water quality. Presently, the interests and concerns of real estate and development interests have a disproportionate voice in new allocations.

## **I. Agriculture**

Food is a necessity and a fundamental human right. All people have a right to adequate, safe, nutritional and high quality food; and those who grow it have a right to a fair return for their labor.

Our current food system is dominated by centralized agribusiness and unsustainable practices that threaten our food security, degrade the environment, destroy communities, and squeeze out family farmers. Our so-called cheap food comes at the expense of the exploitation of our farmers along with the oppression of third world peoples, inhumane treatment of animals, pollution of air and water, and degradation of our land.

The agricultural system for the 21st Century must provide a high quality of life for farmers, nutritious and safe food for consumers, and reward farming methods that enhance the quality of water, soil, and air, and the beauty of the landscape.

According to the 2006 United Nations "Livestock's Long Shadow" report and the World Watch Institute's 2009 article "Livestock and Climate Change," the livestock sector is one of the most significant contributors to our most serious environmental problems, including global warming, land degradation, air and water pollution, and loss of biodiversity.

1. We encourage legislation that assists new farmers and ranchers, that promotes widespread ownership to small and medium-sized farms and ranches, and that revitalizes and repopulates rural communities and promotes sustainable development and stewardship.
2. We support new farming and growing opportunities and urge the inclusion of non-traditional crops and foods in farm programs.
3. We advocate regionalizing our food system and decentralizing agriculture lands, production, and distribution. We encourage public support for producer and consumer cooperatives, community kitchens, Community Supported Agriculture, urban agriculture, and community farms and gardens.

4. We advocate the creation of a Food Policy Council composed of farmers, including small farmers and consumers, to oversee the USDA and all food policies at the local, state, and national level. This council should adjudicate conflicts of interest that arise when industries police themselves.
5. We support the highest organic standards (California Organic Certification Standards, for example). We advocate shifting price supports and government subsidies to organic food products so that they will be competitive with chemically produced food. We believe that everyone, not just the wealthy, must be able to afford safe and healthy food.
6. We urge the banning of sewage sludge or hazardous wastes as fertilizer, and of irradiation and the use of genetic engineering in all food production.
7. We would phase-out man-made pesticides and artificial fertilizers. We support Integrated Pest Management techniques as an alternative to chemical-based agriculture.
8. Food prices ought to reflect the true cost of food, including the health effects of eating processed foods, antibiotic resistance, pesticide effects on growers and consumers, soil erosion, water pollution, pesticide drift, and air pollution. Indirect costs (loss of rural communities, a heavily subsidized transportation system, cost of the military necessary to defend cheap oil, and reduced security), though more difficult to calculate, should be factored into the cost of our highly centralized food system.
9. World hunger can best be addressed by food security—being self-sufficient for basic needs. Overpopulation is largely a consequence, not simply a cause, of poverty and environmental destruction, and all remedial actions must address living standards and food security through sustainable production.
10. Because of the tremendous amount of energy used in agriculture, we support farm subsidies to encourage the transition from dirty fuels to clean renewable energy as one of the most effective ways to move our country to a sustainable future.
11. We support legislation that provides energy and fuel conservation through rotational grazing, cover-crop rotations, nitrogen-fixing systems, and fuel-free, clean renewable energy development on the farm.
12. We encourage states to promote net-metering to make decentralized energy production economically viable.
13. Animal farming must be practiced in ethically and environmentally sustainable ways. We support a rapid phase out of confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs) not only because of their adverse impact on the environment, but also on food safety (e.g. disease epidemics), public health, and animal protection.

14. Applying the Precautionary Principle to genetically modified organisms (GMOs), we support a moratorium until safety can be demonstrated by independent (non-corporate funded), long-term tests for food safety, genetic drift, resistance, soil health, effects on non-target organisms, and cumulative interactions.
15. Most importantly, we support the growing international demand to eliminate patent rights for genetic material, life forms, gene-splicing techniques, and bio-chemicals derived from them. This position is defined by the Treaty to Share the Genetic Commons, which is available through the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy. The implications of corporate takeover and the resulting monopolization of genetic intellectual property by the bioengineering industry are immense.
16. We support mandatory, full-disclosure food and fiber labeling. A consumer has the right to know the contents in their food and fiber, how they were produced, and where they come from. Labels should address the presence of GMOs, use of irradiation, pesticide application (in production, transport, storage, and retail), and the country of origin.
17. We support the restoration of farmlands to black families who have been discriminated against and who have lost, or are about to lose, their farms as a result. Greens will work for a meaningful remedy to restore black farmers' unencumbered ownership of their land.

## **J. Biological Diversity**

Humanity must share the planet with all other species. Our continuing destruction of animal habitats threatens an ever-growing number of species with extinction. This not only deprives these species of their existence, but will deprive future human generations of the enrichment of having these species on the Earth.

Ecological systems are diverse and interlocking, and nature's survival strategy can best be found in the adaptability that comes as a result of biological diversity. All policies concerning human settlement, food, energy, natural resources, water, coastal development, and industrialization should be formulated to prevent further disruption of the non-human ecosystems' ability to maintain themselves.

1. The Green Party supports a strengthened and enforceable Endangered Species Act.
2. The Convention on Biological Diversity, first adopted at the Earth Summit in 1992, is a primary statement of purpose regarding how we can act to preserve and sustain our common genetic resources. We protest the demands of the U.S. to amend this unprecedented international agreement on behalf of the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries, with their insistence on protection of their intellectual property and technology transfer rights.

3. We encourage, and support public access to, seed banks and seed collections that emphasize traditional and heirloom seeds.
4. We call for widespread education on the critical importance of efforts being made to replant indigenous plant life where it has dwindled or been lost.
5. We oppose monopolistic production of high-tech hybrid seeds. This is the basis of monoculture where agribusiness relies on non-sustainable methods such as single crop varieties bred with industrial traits and grown with high input of energy, chemicals, and pesticides. This has led to a massive loss of biodiversity, displacing traditional varieties and seed stocks.
6. We encourage the use of diverse natural seed varieties passed down over many generations. Crops can be grown with the best plants' seeds being saved season to season.
7. We oppose international trade agreements (NAFTA, GATT and the WTO in particular) that have precedent-setting provisions protecting transnational, corporate control of the intellectual property of genetic material, hybrid seeds, and proprietary products.
8. We support reintroducing native species to areas from which they have been eradicated, eliminating predator control on public lands, and reintroducing native predators where they would contribute to a viable ecosystem.
9. We should educate ourselves about animal behaviors to overcome our culture's irrational fear of wildlife, and learn techniques of co-existence with other species.
10. Since the efforts to clone animals — and eventually humans—has been undertaken by profit-making corporations, the purpose behind such projects is to manufacture commodities. To classify a human (or any part thereof, including human DNA and body organs) as a commodity is to turn human beings into property.

## **K. Ethical Treatment Of Animals**

Cruelty to animals is repugnant and criminal. The mark of a humane and civilized society lies in how we treat the least protected among us. To extend rights to other sentient, living beings is our responsibility and a mark of our place among all of creation. We call for an intelligent, compassionate approach to the treatment of animals.

We reject the belief that our species is the center of creation, and that other life forms exist only for our use and enjoyment. Our species does not have the right to exploit and inflict violence on other creatures simply because we have the desire and power to do so. Our ethic upholds not only the value of biological diversity and the integrity and continuity of species, but also the value of individual lives and the interest of individual animals.

The Green Party advocates humane treatment of animals with the following policies:

1. Redirect the funds that are disbursed annually by the National Institutes of Health away from animal experiments and more towards direct health care, preventive medicine, and biomedical research using non-animal procedures such as clinical, epidemiological, and cell culture research.
2. Phase out the use of animals for consumer product testing, tobacco and alcohol testing, psychological testing, classroom demonstrations and dissections, weapons development and other military programs.
3. Mandate clear labeling of products to tell whether or not they have been tested on animals and if they contain any animal products or by-products.
4. Establish procedures to develop greater public scrutiny of all animal research. These should include the welfare of laboratory animals, and a halt to wasteful public funding of unnecessary research such as duplicative experiments.
5. End the abuse of animals, including farm animals, and strengthen our enforcement of existing laws.
6. Ban the use of goods produced from exotic or endangered animals.
7. Prohibit large scale commercial breeding facilities, such as "puppy mills," because of the massive suffering, overpopulation, and ill health such facilities produce.
8. Subsidize spay and neuter clinics to combat the ever-worsening pet overpopulation problem that results in the killing of millions of animals every year. Where unwanted companion animals are being killed in shelters, we advocate mandatory spay and neuter laws.
9. Ban the exploitation of animals in violent entertainment and sports.

## **L. Forestry Practices**

From oxygen production to water conservation to carbon sinks to stratospheric ozone regulation to medicines and homes for all kinds of creatures, forests are indispensable to human and animal life and must be protected.

Globally, the planet has already lost 50% of our pre-colonial forests and the plant and animal communities they supported. Our rapidly increasing numbers, high-consumption rates, and profit incentives have resulted in massive forest destruction due to logging and development, and the Earth's remaining rain forests are being destroyed and transformed into cattle pastures or mono-crops for bio-fuels production.

The increase in tree die-off in the U.S. and elsewhere in the last few decades is alarming. The causes are multiple: pests, diseases, climate change, acid rain, other forms of pollution, and increased UV radiation due to our thinned ozone layer.

In our Eastern woodlands, for example, the normal pre-pollution background mortality rate would be 0.5 to 0.7% per year. That translates to the death of one tree out of 100 living trees each year. Anything over a 2 or 3% mortality rate per year is considered a disaster. Yet, we are now witnessing local tree die-offs of 30 to 40% and even higher!

The fact is that the pollution inherent to our industrial production and lifestyles has weakened the resistance of the interconnected ecosystems we call forests. Malnourished due to acid rain's destruction of their roots, and bombarded by unusually high UV radiation, our forests are falling victim to a host of diseases and pests. Forestry practices such as clearcutting also destroy the mycorrhizal fungi with which trees have a symbiotic relationship, and regeneration is slowed or impossible.

The Green Party calls for actions to protect our forests:

1. Overhaul state and U.S. Forest Service rules to protect our forests and use them wisely.
2. Review, reform and restructure all federal and state landuse policies so that our practices become environmentally sustainable, and so that forests provide a continuing supply of high quality wood products.
3. Stop building logging roads in national forests at taxpayers' expense. These roads not only cost more than the revenue from timber sales that they expedite, but they also contribute to soil erosion and silting of streams, which ruin fish habitats.
4. Ban the harvest of Ancient Forests.
5. Ban the export of raw logs and other minimally processed forest products (pulp, chips, carts, slabs, etc.), which causes American job loss.
6. Offer subsidies to local watershed-based mills. This will maximize employment opportunities through value-added processing, and promote sustainability and worker control.
7. Use work projects, goats, and other sustainable methods to control undergrowth rather than spraying herbicides, especially near communities.
8. Grow and use hemp as a plentiful and renewable resource for the manufacture of paper and other forest products.
9. Protect significant archaeological, historical and cultural sites.

10. Support the rights of people indigenous to the rainforest, and their ecologically sound use of the forest, such as rubber extraction, nut gathering, and collecting medicinal herbs. End the importation of rainforest beef.
11. Forgive the debts of Third World countries that need help in halting the destruction of their rain forest lands.
12. Develop labels that identify ecologically sound forest products. This would help consumers to support ecologically sound forestry.
13. Protect wildlife habitats, fisheries, biodiversity, scenery, and recreation. We must accept responsibility for the affect local actions have on the global economy and ecology.
14. Mandate that all U.S. Government offices use 100% post-consumer waste paper processed chlorine free, and that any new fiber necessary to the process come from alternative sources such as hemp or kenaf. Where recycled paper is inappropriate, such as for archival quality paper, high quality fiber such as hemp should be the primary source.
15. Ban all clearcutting on publicly owned lands and in privately owned "old-growth" forests, and strictly regulate clearcutting in private sector commercial forestry.

## **M. Ocean Protection**

### **OUR POSITION**

Our oceans, with their enormous diversity of life and function, are essential to life on Earth and must be preserved.

Our oceans are threatened by climate change, pollution, whaling, over fishing, factory fishing, bottom trawling, by catch, pirate fishing and fish farming. Simple, strong policy changes can rejuvenate the health of our oceans and planet.

### **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

1. Protect 40% of the world's oceans as marine preserves, especially near shore coastal habitats. Determine protected zones through a democratic process involving all stakeholders.
2. Ban offshore oil drilling.
3. Ban the siting of liquefied natural gas facilities off the U.S. coast.
4. Phase out use of the once-through cooling process, currently used by power plants, in and near coastal waters.
5. Require secondary treatment of waste effluent before release.

6. Ban ocean transportation of nuclear and toxic waste.
7. Ban sonar testing in the oceans.
8. Support the ban on international commercial whaling as well as other international efforts to protect endangered marine species.
9. Ban drift-net fishing and long-line fishing and phase out factory trawling.
10. Map undersea toxic dump sites, and investigate methods of rendering them harmless.
11. Ban the importation of fish and fish products caught by drift-nets and other illegal means.
12. Ban the importation of coral products and the destruction of breakwaters.
13. Support the Law of the Sea Treaty that establishes the global sharing of ocean resources.
14. Support complete cleanup of existing and past oil spills. Cost of cleanups and compensation for affected communities should be paid by the corporations responsible for the spills.

#### **IV. Economic Justice and Sustainability (2016)**

Green economics is rooted in ecological economics. Our economy should serve us and our planet. Our economy should reflect and respect the diverse, delicate ecosystems of our planet.

Our current economic system is gravely flawed. It is unjust and unsustainable because it is premised on endless economic growth and destruction of nature. Our market economy, by externalizing the environmental and social costs of greenhouse gas emissions, is creating the greatest market failure in history: climate change, and its devastating effects. Our government's top economic goal — increasing Gross Domestic Product — impels us to perpetually intensify our resource use and environmental destruction.

Green economic policy places value not just on material wealth, but on the things which truly make life worth living — our health, our relationships, our communities, our environment, and building peace and justice throughout our nation and the world. We aim to maximize our quality of life with a minimum of consumption. We aspire to less "stuff" but more happiness. We propose a shift away from materialism to help people live more meaningful lives as we save the planet from climate change and ever-larger mountains of waste. We need to acquire the ability to distinguish between need and greed.

We must also end the colossal waste of taxpayer funds for armaments and war, to reduce our nation's federal debt, and fund our environmental and social needs.

Greens intend to provide a green job to anyone who wants one. We support using the tax system to bring more equality to our nation. Rising income inequality makes us all poorer in myriad ways. More equal societies are happier, healthier, safer and greener.

Greens support strong local economies and regional trade. The best model of economic security is for a community and region to be largely self-sufficient in the production of its necessities. We support not the corporate control of "free trade" – which, through the machinations of the World Trade Organization places the enrichment of multinational corporations above the level of national laws – but "fair trade," which protects communities, labor, consumers and the environment. Local economic vibrancy and regional trade keep more money in the community and the region, rather than going to distant corporate headquarters. This is the most sensible model for economic security.

Greens will change the legal design of the corporation so that it does not maximize profits at the expense of the environment, human rights, public health, workers, or the communities in which it operates. We believe the giant multinational corporation is the world's most potent force for environmental and social destruction.

Unlike other political parties in the modern era, the Green Party views economics not as an end in itself but as a service to community development through the building and strengthening of community bonds that constitute the social fabric.

Greens are defenders of the commons – the vast trove of wealth owned by the people, the social and tangible assets we inherit from generations past. Most people living in this country yearn for a more vibrant and lively commons, such as a richer community life, more parks and protected wilderness, clean air and water, more silence, better access to information and knowledge, and a more nourishing culture. We must stop big business from undermining and stealing our common wealth, such as our public forests and minerals, the fruits of federal research, the public airwaves and the Internet.

## **A. Ecological Economics**

To create an enduring society we must devise a system of production and commerce where every act is sustainable and restorable. We believe that all business has a social contract with society and the environment – in effect a fiduciary responsibility – and that the concepts of socially responsible business and shareholder democracy can be models for prospering, successful business.

1. We call for an economic system that is based on a combination of private businesses, decentralized democratic cooperatives, publicly owned enterprises, and alternative economic structures. Collectively, this system puts human and ecological needs alongside profits to measure success, and maintains accountability to communities.
2. Community-based economics constitutes an alternative to both corporate capitalism and state socialism. It values diversity and decentralization.

3. Recognition of limits is central to this system. The drive to accumulate power and wealth is a pernicious characteristic of a civilization headed in a pathological direction. Greens advocate that economic relations become more direct, more cooperative, and more egalitarian.
4. Humanizing economic relations is just one aspect of our broader objective: to shift toward a different way of life characterized by sustainability, regionalization, more harmonious balance between the natural ecosphere and the human-made technosphere, and revival of community life. Our perspective is antithetical to both Big Business and Big Government.
5. Greens support a major redesign of commerce. We endorse true-cost pricing. [See section E.1. True Cost Pricing] We support production methods that eliminate waste. In natural systems, everything is a meal for something else. Everything recycles, there is no waste. We need to mimic natural systems in the way we manufacture and produce things. Consumables need to be designed to be thrown into a compost heap and/or eaten. Durable goods would be designed in closed-loop systems, ultimately to be disassembled and reassembled. Toxics would be safeguarded, minimally produced, secured, and would ideally have markers identifying them in perpetuity with their makers.
6. The Green Party seeks to build an alternative economic system based on ecology and decentralization of power, an alternative that rejects both the capitalist system that maintains private ownership over almost all production as well as the state-socialist system that assumes control over industries without democratic, local decision making. We believe the old models of capitalism (private ownership of production) and state socialism (state ownership of production) are not ecologically sound, socially just, or democratic and that both contain built-in structures that advance injustices. Instead we will build an economy based on large-scale green public works, municipalization, and workplace and community democracy. Some call this decentralized system "ecological socialism," "communalism," or the "cooperative commonwealth," but whatever the terminology, we believe it will help end labor exploitation, environmental exploitation, and racial, gender, and wealth inequality and bring about economic and social justice due to the positive effects of democratic decision making.

Production is best for people and planet when democratically owned and operated by those who do the work and those most affected by production decisions. This model of worker and community empowerment will ensure that decisions that greatly affect our lives are made in the interests of our communities, not at the whim of centralized power structures of state administrators or of capitalist CEOs and distant boards of directors. Small, democratically run enterprises, when embedded in and accountable to our communities, will make more ecologically sound decisions in materials sourcing, waste disposal, recycling, reuse, and more. Democratic, diverse ownership of

production would decentralize power in the workplace, which would in turn decentralize economic power more broadly.

7. Greens view the economy as a part of the ecosystem, not as an isolated subset in which nothing but resources come in and products and waste go out. There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and environmental protection. There is an absolute limit to economic growth based on laws of thermodynamics and principles of ecology. Long before that limit is reached, an optimum size of the economy is reached which maximizes human welfare in an holistic sense.
8. We support a Superfund for Workers program as envisioned by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union in 1991. Such a program would guarantee full income and benefits for all workers displaced by ecological conversion until they find new jobs with comparable income and benefits.
9. The Green Party supports methods, such as the Index of Social Health Indicators, the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, and the Genuine Progress Indicator, that take into account statistics on housing, income, and nutrition.

## **B. Measuring Economic Health**

Economic growth has been a primary goal of U.S. policy. Corporations, politicians beholden to corporations, and economists funded by corporations advocate a theory of unlimited economic growth stemming from technological progress. Based upon established principles of the physical and biological sciences, however, there is a limit to economic growth.

This policy of securing economic growth is having negative effects on the long-term ecological and economic welfare of the United States and the world. There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and ecological health (for example, biodiversity conservation, clean air and water, atmospheric stability).

We cannot rely on technological progress to solve ecological and long-term economic problems. Rather, we should endeavor to make lifestyle choices that reinforce a general equilibrium of humans with nature. This requires consciously choosing to foster environmentally sound technologies, whether they are newer or older technologies, rather than technologies conducive to conspicuous consumption and waste.

1. Economic growth, as gauged by increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is a dangerous and anachronistic goal. The most viable and sustainable alternative is a steady-state economy. A steady-state economy has a stable or mildly fluctuating product of population and per capita consumption, and is generally indicated by stable or mildly fluctuating GDP. The steady-state economy has become a more appropriate goal than economic growth in the United States and other large, wealthy economies. A steady-state economy precludes ever-expanding production and consumption of

goods and services. However, a steady-state economy does not preclude economic development—a qualitative process not gauged by GDP growth and other measures that overlook ecological effects.

2. One way to measure the economy is to assess the value of non-monetary goods and services and measure the rate of infant mortality, life expectancy of people, educational opportunities offered by the state, family stability, environmental data, and health care for all people. Another measure is to quantify human benefit (in terms of education, health care, elder care, etc.) provided by each unit of output. Measuring the gap between the most fortunate and the least fortunate in our society, for example, tells us how well or poorly we are doing in creating an economy that does not benefit some at the expense of others.
3. For many nations with widespread poverty, increasing per capita consumption (through economic growth or through more equitable distributions of wealth) remains an appropriate goal. Ultimately, however, the global ecosystem will not be able to support further economic growth. Therefore, an equitable distribution of wealth among nations is required to maintain a global steady-state economy. A global economy with inequitable wealth distribution will be subject to continual international strife and conflict. Such strife and conflict, in turn, ensures the economic unsustainability of some nations and threatens the economic sustainability of all.

### **C. Curbing Corporate Power**

#### **OUR POSITION**

Greens want to reduce the economic and political power of large corporations, end corporate personhood and re-design corporations to serve our society, democracy and the environment.

Unelected and unaccountable corporate executives are not merely exercising power in our society — they are ruling us. Greens will reduce corporate powers and privileges, including by stripping them of artificial "personhood" and constitutional protections. The Green Party supports strong and effectively enforced antitrust laws and regulation to counteract the concentration of economic and political power that imposes a severe toll on people, places and the planet.

Greens believe the legal structure of the corporation is obsolete. At present, corporations are designed solely to generate profit. This legal imperative — profit above all else — is damaging our country and our planet in countless ways. We must change the legal design of corporations so that they generate profits, but not at the expense of the environment, human rights, public health, workers, or the communities in which the corporation operates.

One point remains unequivocal: our planet cannot afford business as usual any longer. Because corporations have become the dominant economic institution of the planet, we must compel them to serve human and environmental needs, so that our peoples, nations and environment may live long and prosper.

## **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

1. End corporate personhood. A key first step will be federal and state constitutional amendments abolishing the legal fiction of corporate personhood.
2. Federal chartering of corporations that includes comprehensive, strict and enforceable social responsibility requirements.
3. Strengthen the civil justice system to ensure that it holds corporations strictly liable for corporate crime, fraud, violence and malfeasance. This would include revoking the charters of corporations that routinely violate safety, health, environmental protection or other laws.
4. Empower shareholders to stop abuses by the managers they hire through a structure of democratic governance and elections.
5. Enforce existing antitrust laws and support even tougher new ones to curtail the overwhelming economic and political power of large corporations.
6. Increase funding for and strengthen oversight of federal antitrust enforcement.

## **D. Livable Income**

We affirm the importance of access to a livable income.

1. We call for a universal basic income (sometimes called a guaranteed income, negative income tax, citizen's income, or citizen dividend). This would go to every adult regardless of health, employment, or marital status, in order to minimize government bureaucracy and intrusiveness into people's lives. The amount should be sufficient so that anyone who is unemployed can afford basic food and shelter. State or local governments should supplement that amount from local revenues where the cost of living is high.
2. Job banks and other innovative training and employment programs which bring together the private and public sectors must become federal, state and local priorities. People who are unable to find decent work in the private sector should have options through publicly funded opportunities. Workforce development programs must aim at moving people out of poverty.
3. The growing inequities in income and wealth between rich and poor; unprecedented discrepancies in salary and benefits between corporate top executives and line workers; loss of the "American dream" by the young and middle-class—each is a

symptom of decisions made by policy-makers far removed from the concerns of ordinary workers trying to keep up.

4. A clear living wage standard should serve as a foundation for trade between nations, and a "floor" of guaranteed wage protections and workers' rights should be negotiated in future trade agreements. The United States should take the lead on this front — and not allow destructive, predatory corporate practices under the guise of "free" international trade.

## **E. Fair Taxation**

### **OUR POSITION**

Federal and state taxes must be strongly progressive.

Our current tax system is outrageously unjust. It is riddled with loopholes, subsidies and dodges for corporations and the super-rich. Most working people pay too much in taxes compared to corporations, multi-millionaires and billionaires. Many of our biggest and most profitable corporations pay little or no tax. Much investment income is taxed at less than the rate workers pay.

We can afford to cut taxes for most people if we make corporations and the super-rich pay their fair share. Then we can cut them even more when we halt our nation's wasteful spending on wars, weaponry and militarism.

We call for progressive taxation, shifting tax from individuals to corporations, taxing "bads" not "goods," taxing unearned income at the same rate as earned income, taxing speculation on Wall Street, and cutting corporate tax giveaways.

We will institute comprehensive tax reform to simplify the tax system. We will eliminate loopholes and other exemptions that favor corporate and wealthy interests over tax justice.

Small business, in particular, should not be penalized by a tax system which benefits those who can "work" the legislative tax committees for breaks and subsidies. We support substantive and wide-ranging re- form of the tax system that helps create jobs, economic efficiencies and innovation within the small business community. We will end "corporate welfare." Smaller businesses are the U. S. A's great strength. Greens believe government should have a tax policy which encourages small and socially responsible business.

Political democracy remains a distant promise without economic democracy. A principal instrument for achieving economic democracy is our tax system. Taxes are the means whereby we fund our public services. They can also help create equity, justice, health and sustainability.

## GREEN SOLUTIONS

### Cut taxes for wage workers

1. Exempt people earning less than \$25,000 per year and families earning less than \$50,000 per year (adjusted for inflation) from the federal and state income taxes.
2. Exempt food, clothing, prescription medications, other necessities and second-hand goods from sales taxes.
3. Fair taxes for corporations and the wealthy.
4. End corporate welfare, such as the bailouts for Wall Street, the big banks and the automobile industry; subsidies for agribusiness, Export-Import Bank loan guarantees; tax abatements for big box stores; the tax loophole for "carried interest" from private equity and hedge fund managers; tax deductibility for advertising and business entertainment; offshore tax avoidance schemes; giveaways for new sports stadiums and casinos.
5. Impose a financial transaction tax on trades of stocks, bonds, currency, derivatives, and other financial instruments.
6. Block financial transactions with tax havens, to stop tax evasion.
7. Decrease the \$1 million home value cap on the mortgage interest tax deduction for federal income taxes, to reduce the tax subsidy provided to those living in the most expensive homes.
8. Restore the estate tax.
9. Apply the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (Social Security and Medicare) taxes to investment income and to all levels of income, not merely the first \$106,800 earned.
10. Oppose the privatization of Social Security.
11. Enact a wealth tax of 0.5% per year on an individual's assets over \$5 million.
12. Eco-taxes to help save the planet.
13. Establish a system of carbon taxes on all fossil fuels, to begin to reflect the real environmental cost of their extraction and use. Carbon taxes should be applied as far upstream as possible, preferably when possession of the carbon-bearing fuel passes from extraction (for example, coal mine; oil wellhead or tanker; gas wellhead) to the next entity in the supply chain (for example, coal shipper or utility; oil refiner or importer; natural gas pipeline). Offset potential regressivity for lower income individuals via the Green Tax shift that lowers income taxes and/or other approaches.
14. Eliminate tax subsidies for the oil, gas, coal, nuclear and timber and mining industries.

15. Enact a Green Tax Shift that shifts from taxing people and work (via income and payroll taxes) to taxing natural resource extraction, use, waste and pollution.
16. Enact a system of Community Ground Rent/Land Value Taxation that distinguishes between the socially and privately created wealth of land, by increasing the taxes on the former to retain for society the value that it collectively creates and lowers them on the latter to reward individuals for their initiative and work.
17. To ensure that prices reflect their true environmental cost, enact a system of True Cost Pricing (TCP) for goods and services. TCP is an accounting and pricing system that includes all costs in the price of a product. TCP charges extractive and productive industries for the immediate or prolonged damage (pollution of air and water) and diminishment of natural resources caused by their acts.
18. Impose a carbon fee on goods imported from nations with lower carbon taxes than in the U.S., based upon the carbon spent in manufacturing and transporting them to the U.S.

#### **Other tax reforms**

19. Simplify the tax code. Make it transparent, understandable and resistant to the machinations of powerful corporate and wealthy interests.
20. Eliminate tax incentives to send jobs overseas.
21. Raise taxes on tobacco, alcohol, soda pop and other junk food.

#### **F. Local Economic Development**

##### **OUR POSITION**

Greens support reforms that give communities more control over their own local economies.

Greens support decentralization, and call for a community-based economics whose aim is local prosperity and self-sufficiency.

We support local production, local manufacturing, local sales, local recycling wherever and whenever possible. We encourage face-to-face relationships with local business owners and shopkeepers.

Successful local Green communities nurture everyone of all ages, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; creating cities and towns that educate everyone, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources; building local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime; and motivating citizens to participate in making decisions.

## GREEN SOLUTIONS

1. Protect local businesses from the predatory pricing practices of chain and "big box" stores.
2. Support incentives for co-operative enterprises, such as consumer co-ops, workers' co-operatives, credit unions and other institutions that help communities develop economic projects.
3. Allow municipalities to approve or disapprove large economic projects case-by-case based on environmental impacts, local ownership, community reinvestment, wage levels, and working conditions.
4. Allow communities to set environmental, consumer, human rights, labor, health and safety standards higher than federal or state minimums.
5. Invest in the commons: rebuild infrastructure; improve mass transit; protect and restore the environment.
6. Support local living wage laws.
7. Establish local currencies such as Time Dollars, Ithaca Hours and BerkShares, to strengthen local economies.
8. Enact place of origin labeling.
9. Enact corporate "good character" laws, requiring corporations, when applying for a permit, to disclose all violations of law they have committed. Empower officials to deny permits based on such information.

### **G. Small Business and the Self-Employed**

Greens support a program that counteracts concentration and abuse of economic power. We support many different initiatives for forming successful, small enterprises that together can become an engine of (and sustainable model for) job creation, prosperity and progress. Small businesses are where the jobs are being created. Over the past decade and a half, all new net job growth has come from the small business sector.

The Green economic model is about true prosperity—Green means prosperity. Our goal is to go beyond the dedicated good work being done by many companies (referred to as "socially responsible business") and to present new ways of seeing how business can help create a sustainable world, while surviving in a competitive business climate.

We believe that conservation should be profitable, and employment should be creative, meaningful and fairly compensated.

Access to capital is often an essential need in growing a business. [See section I. Banking and Insurance Reform in this chapter]

The present tax system acts to discourage small business as it encourages waste, discourages conservation, and rewards consumption. Big business has used insider access to dominate the federal tax code. The tax system needs a major overhaul to favor the legitimate and critical needs of the small business community. Retention of capital through retained earnings, efficiencies, and savings is central to small business competitiveness. Current tax policies often act to unfairly penalize small business.

1. Government should reduce unnecessary restrictions, fees, and bureaucracy. In particular, the Paper Simplification Act should be seen as a way to benefit small business, and it should be improved in response to the needs of small businesses and the self-employed.
2. Health insurance premiums paid by the self-employed should be fully deductible.
3. State and local government should encourage businesses that benefit the community especially. Economic development initiatives should include citizen and community input. The type and size of businesses that are given incentives (tax, loans, bonds, etc.) should be the result of local community participation.
4. Pension funds (the result of workers' investments) should be examined as additional sources of capital for small business. [See section J. Pension Reform in this chapter]
5. Insurance costs should be brought down by means of active engagement with the insurance industry. Insurance pools need to be expanded.
6. One-stop offices should be established by government to assist individuals who want to change careers or go into business for the first time.
7. Home-based and neighborhood-based businesses should be assisted by forward-looking planning, not hurt by out-of-date zoning ordinances. Telecommuting and home offices should be aided, not hindered, by government.

## **H. Work and Job Creation**

There is plenty of work to do that does not jeopardize our future, does not widen the gap between the richest and the poorest in our society, and that can enrich our communities. We must encourage the creation of these opportunities. People whose livelihoods depend on supporting remote, multi-national corporations cannot be expected to support changing the system.

The Green Party proposes a third alternative to a job or no job dichotomy: that is to provide everyone a sustainable livelihood. The need of our times is for security, not

necessarily jobs. We need security in the knowledge that, while markets may fluctuate and jobs may come and go, we are still able to lead a life rooted in dignity and well-being.

The concept of a "job" is only a few hundred years old; and the artificial dichotomy between "employment" and "unemployment" has become a tool of social leverage for corporate exploiters. This produces a dysfunctional society in various ways: (1) It is used to justify bringing harmful industries to rural communities, such as extensive prison construction and clear cutting of pristine forests. (2) It has been used to pit workers (people needing jobs) against the interests of their own communities. (3) It has created a self-esteem crisis in a large segment of the adult population who have been forced into doing work that is irrelevant, socially harmful, or environmentally unsound.

We will also promote policies that have job-increasing effects. Many people will still need jobs for their security. We need to counterbalance the decline in jobs caused either by new technology, corporate flight to cheaper labor markets outside our borders, or the disappearance of socially wasteful jobs that will inevitably occur as more and more people embrace a green culture.

To begin a transition to a system providing sustainable livelihood, we support:

1. Creating alternative, low-consumption communities and living arrangements, including a reinvigorated sustainable homesteading movement in rural areas and voluntary shared housing in urban areas.
2. Universal health care requiring coverage for all. [See section F. Health Care in chapter II]
3. The creating and spreading local currencies and barter systems.
4. Subsidizing technological development of consumer items that would contribute toward economic autonomy, such as renewable energy devices.
5. Establishing local non-profit development corporations.
6. Providing people with information about alternatives to jobs.

### **Creating jobs**

For creating jobs we propose:

7. Reducing taxes on labor. This will make labor more competitive with energy and capital investment. (See Taxation above)
8. Solidarity with unions and workers fighting the practice of contracting out tasks to part-time workers in order to avoid paying benefits and to break up unions.

9. Adopting a reduced-hour (30-35 hours) work week as a standard. This could translate into as many as 26 million new jobs.
10. Subsidizing renewable energy sources, which directly employ 2 to 5 times as many people for every unit of electricity generated as fossil or nuclear sources yet are cost competitive. Also, retrofit existing buildings for energy conservation and build non-polluting, low impact transportation systems.
11. Supporting small business by reducing tax, fee and bureaucratic burdens. The majority of new jobs today are created by small businesses. This would cut their failure rate and help them create more jobs.
12. Opposing the trend toward "bundling" of contracts that minimizes opportunity for small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses.
13. Reducing consumption to minimize outsourcing – the exportation of jobs to other countries—thus reducing the relative price of using U.S. workers.

## **I. Banking and Insurance Reform**

### **OUR POSITION**

Greens will overhaul the financial industries to end their culture of impunity and to prevent them from committing fraud or malfeasance so severe as to drive our nation into a massive recession or depression.

Since finance, banking, and insurance institutions occupy a privileged position of power at the center of commerce, this special advantage brings with it special social responsibilities. We must ensure that the institutions chartered for these roles take that responsibility seriously and serve the public interest.

Greens aim to reform the financial industries to eliminate usury (exorbitantly high interest rates on loans) and ensure that they meet their obligations to taxpayers and local communities.

### **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

#### **Banking reform**

1. Break up our nation's largest banks and financial institutions so that none is "too big to fail." End taxpayer-funded bailouts for banks, insurers and other financial companies.
2. Regulate all financial derivatives, ban any predatory or gambling use of derivatives, and require full transparency for all derivative trades, to control risk of systemic financial collapse. Require regulatory pre-approval of exotic financial instruments.

3. Re-enact the Glass-Steagall Act, which prohibited bank holding companies from owning other financial companies and engaging in risky economic transactions.
4. Oppose the federal government being the final guarantor of speculative investments. During a financial crisis, if the federal government and/or a central bank must provide relief, it should be given in an equal manner and at the most local level possible, so that benefits are equitably dispersed and burdens are equitably borne. So rather than pouring trillions of dollars into the banking system, they should have provided direct mortgage relief to homeowners suffering the most from the housing bubble and negotiated with lenders to provide partial loan forgiveness.
5. Ensure that low- and middle-income people have access to banking services, affordable loans, and small-business supporting capital, especially through credit unions.
6. Oppose disinvestment practices, in which lending and financial institutions move money deposited in local communities out of those same communities, damaging the best interests of their customers and community.
7. Support the extension of the Community Reinvestment Act to provide public and timely information on the extent of housing loans, small business loans to minority-owned enterprises, investments in community development projects, and affordable housing.
8. Strengthen disclosure laws, anti-redlining laws, and openness on the part of lenders regarding what criteria they use in making lending decisions.
9. Oppose arbitrary or discriminatory practices that deny individuals or small business access to credit.
10. Support development of charter community development banks, which would be capitalized with public funds and work to meet the credit needs of local communities.
11. Support the expansion of co-operative credit unions.
12. Prosecute criminal banking speculation. The Green Party of the United States stands for the reversing the U.S. government bailouts of speculators who engaged in mortgage fraud and related financial crimes. The Green Party calls for aggressive investigation and prosecution of the individuals and corporate entities that targeted families of modest means for predatory home loans, and the large-scale securitization of these loans. Penalties should include prison terms, revocation of corporate charters and confiscation of corporate and individual assets.
13. Impose a moratorium on foreclosures. An ongoing mortgage-related crime wave is occurring around fraudulent foreclosures, rushed through without proper legal clearances or documentation, often on properties which foreclosing entities cannot

even prove they own. We demand a four-year moratorium on foreclosures intended to recoup losses from predatory lending. The proposed moratorium would apply to all homes used as a primary residence and valued under \$350,000.

14. Access to primary, secondary, post-secondary and vocational education should be a right of all, not a privilege of the wealthy, and certainly not an opportunity for predatory lenders. It's time to forgive all student and parent loans taken out to finance post-secondary and vocational education. The estimated \$40 billion is a fraction of the bailout distributed among the predatory lenders who created the student debt crisis and would make a material difference for households across the country.

### **Monetary Reform (Greening the Dollar)**

The crisis in our financial system makes it imperative that we restructure our monetary system. The present system of privatized control has resulted in the misdirection of our resources to speculation, toxic loans, and phony financial instruments that create huge profits for the few but no real wealth or jobs. It is both possible and necessary for our government to take back its special money creation privilege and spend this money into circulation through a carefully controlled policy of directing funds, through community banks and interest-free loans, to local and state government entities to be used for infrastructure, health, education, and the arts. This would add millions of good jobs, enrich our communities, and go a long way toward ending the current deep recession.

To reverse the privatization of control over the money issuing process of our nation's monetary system; to reverse its resulting obscene and undeserved concentration of wealth and income; to place it within a more equitable public system of governmental checks and balances; and to end the regular recurrence of severe and disruptive banking crises such as the ongoing financial crisis which threatens the livelihood of millions; the Green Party supports the following interconnected solutions:

15. Nationalize the 12 Federal Reserve Banks, reconstituting them and the Federal Reserve Systems Washington Board of Governors under a new Monetary Authority Board within the U.S. Treasury. The private creation of money or credit which substitutes for money, will cease and with it the reckless and fraudulent practices that have led to the present financial and economic crisis.
16. The Monetary Authority, with assistance from the FDIC, the SEC, the U.S. Treasury, the Congressional Budget Office, and others will redefine bank lending rules and procedures to end the privilege banks now have to create money when they extend their credit, by ending what's known as the fractional reserve system in an elegant, non disruptive manner. Banks will be encouraged to continue as profit making companies, extending loans of real money at interest; acting as intermediaries between those clients seeking a return on their savings and those clients ready and able to pay for borrowing the money; but banks will no longer be creators of what we are using for money.

17. The new money that must be regularly added to an improving system as population and commerce grow will be created and spent into circulation by the U. S. Government for infrastructure, including the "human infrastructure" of education and health care. This begins with the \$2.2 trillion the American Society of Civil Engineers warns us is needed to bring existing infrastructure to safe levels over the next 5 years. Per capita guidelines will assure a fair distribution of such expenditures across the United States, creating good jobs, re-invigorating the local economies and re-funding government at all levels. As this money is paid out to various contractors, they in turn pay their suppliers and laborers who in turn pay for their living expenses and ultimately this money gets deposited into banks, which are then in a position to make loans of this money, according to the new regulations.

### **Insurance reform**

18. Clean up the insurance industry. Eliminate special-interest protections, collusion, over-pricing and industry-wide practices that too often injure the interests of the insured when they are most vulnerable. Prohibit bad-faith insurance practices, such as avoidance of obligations and price fixing.
19. Enact single-payer universal health insurance. Until single-payer is established, we support laws that act to make insurance policies transportable from job to job.
20. Support and encourage the insurance industry's efforts for "loss prevention," that is, to reduce the incidence of death, injuries, disease and other calamities.
21. Support initiatives in secondary insurance markets that expand credit for economic development in inner cities, affordable housing and home ownership among the poor, sustainable agriculture and rural development maintaining family farms.
22. Prohibit companies from being the beneficiary of insurance on their own employees.

### **Broader financial industry reforms**

23. Support a 10% cap on interest rates, above inflation, for credit cards, mortgages, payday loans and all other consumer lending.
24. Aggressively crack down on crime, fraud, malfeasance and tax evasion in the financial and insurance industries.
25. Reduce excessive executive pay.
26. Support the formation of Citizens' Utility Boards to defend the interests of consumers and policyholders.
27. Favor a tax on stock, bond, foreign currency and derivatives transactions to discourage excessive speculation.

## **J. Pension Reform**

Working people—who own over \$3 trillion in pension monies (deferred wages in effect)—should have financial options in where their money is invested apart from the current near-monopoly exerted by a handful of managers, banks, insurance companies, and mutual funds. Pension funds should not be used for corporate mergers, acquisitions and leveraged buyouts, corporate decisions that undercut workers rights, employment, and retirement while generously rewarding non-productive speculation. The current system has allowed vast amounts of workers' hard-earned money to be squandered on job-ending, plant-moving, corporate downsizing.

Pension funds are gigantic capital pools that can, with government support, be used to meet community needs and benefit workers and their families directly.

1. Corporate-sponsored pension funds (the biggest category of funds) should be jointly controlled by management and workers, not exclusively by management.
2. Federal law must be changed so that pension funds need simply to seek a reasonable rate of return, not the prevailing market rate which greatly restricts where investments can be made.
3. A secondary pension market established by the government to insure pension investments made in socially beneficial programs must be considered as one method that could greatly expand the impact of this capital market, as demonstrated in the case of federally insured/ subsidized mortgage lending.
4. Prudent pension fund investing should both make money and do good work. Creating jobs and supporting employment programs in public/ private partnerships can become a priority as we seek to expand towards opportunities where new jobs are created small business, not transnational business. We could target the under- and unemployed. We believe there are myriad opportunities for a profound shift in how the savings of our workers are best put to use.

## **K. Anti-Trust Enforcement**

The Green Party supports strong and effectively enforced anti-trust regulation to counteract the concentration of economic power that imposes a severe toll on the economy. The anti-trust division of the Justice Department has had its scope and powers reduced. An explosion of unregulated mergers and acquisitions, spinoffs, and leveraged buy-outs has overwhelmed the federal government's capacity to provide effective oversight. Financial and trading markets have become particularly vulnerable to insider trading. Securities and Exchange Commission regulation of these markets has seriously fallen short. Overall, what we see in unchecked market power is self-serving abuse of the

democratic political process, price gouging, loss of productivity and jobs, reduced competitiveness, and of predatory and monopolistic practices.

1. The Federal Trade Commission must vigorously oversee mergers where the combined sales of the companies exceeds \$1 billion.
2. The Justice Department must redefine "relevant market share" in assessing mergers.
3. The Congress must enact its calls for competitiveness by stopping illegal monopolistic practices.
4. We oppose the largesse of government in the form of massive corporate entitlements.

#### **L. Advanced Technology and Defense Conversion**

The Green Party supports defense technology transfer towards a peacetime technology-based economy, particularly new industrial applications and developments in the areas of advanced communications, alternative energy, non-toxic battery technology and waste management.

1. Consolidation of the nuclear weapons complex should move toward alternative civilian technologies and non-proliferation work, not toward a new generation of nuclear weapon design and production.
2. We recognize the need for de-escalating the continuing arms race, and we strongly oppose putting nuclear weapons, lasers and other weapons in space in a new militarization policy that is in clear violation of international law. [See section F. Demilitarization and Exploration of Space in chapter I]
3. Let us go forward with government and civilian space programs; research initiatives in sustainability science, environmental protection, ecological economics and transportation, appropriate technologies and technology transfer; environmental sampling and monitoring; systems testing; laser communications; and high speed computers.
4. Let us devote a larger percentage of our nation's research and development budget, both private and public, toward civilian use and away from military use. Let us address our chronic trade imbalance in this fashion—not by increasing exports of military weapons and technologies.
5. The Green Party opposes patenting or copyrighting life forms, algorithms, DNA, colors or commonly used words and phrases. We support broad interpretation and ultimate expansion of the Fair Use of copyrighted works. We support open source and copyleft models in order to promote the public interest and the spirit of copyright.
6. We call for a federal Technology Assessment Office to examine how technology fits with life on Earth, with our neighborhoods, and with the quality of our daily lives.

## Telecommunications

Advanced telecommunications technologies (many of which came originally from defense applications), such as fiber optics, broadband infrastructure, the Internet, and the World Wide Web hold great promise for education, decentralized economies, and local control of decision-making. We believe we must move toward decentralization in these efforts, carefully protecting our individual rights as we go forward.

7. Advanced and high definition TV, digital communications, and wireless communications hold promise and challenge. For example, the public airwaves that will accommodate the new generation of telecommunications technology should not be free giveaways to media giants. An auction and built-in requirements that attach licenses to act in the public interest is needed. Technology provides tools: we must use these tools appropriately and ethically. [See section J. Free Speech and Media Reform in chapter II]
8. Broadband Internet access should be open to bidding, not simply the current choice between cable or telephone company monopolies, where grassroots Internet service providers must merge or go out of business. Broadband access should be a taxpayer-funded utility, like water and sewer, ending the "digital divide" that keeps low-income folks from access to the Internet.

The Internet is a commons, developed with public funds, and must insure freedom and equality of access. The Green Party opposes Internet access tiered service controlled by an Internet service provider (ISP), with independent (not housed with the ISP) most costly and inaccessible. ISPs and advertisers should not be gatekeepers.

The Green Party calls for increased protection for user privacy and for accountability on the part of ISPs.

## Open-Source Software

Open-source software is necessary to achieve personal, cultural, and organizational security in the face of technological threats brought by corporations and individual criminals.

9. Government has a vital role in breaking up software monopolies, not so much by filing antitrust suits, but by buying nothing but open systems. The U.S. Government and the larger states are buyers large enough to influence the computer and software systems through their purchasing. It should be illegal for a government agency to create and store information vital to its operations in a format it doesn't control. Governments should always consider storing information with open-source software and in-house staff instead of only commercial systems, vendors and software. One way to achieve this would be to add a virtual bid for in-house open source deployment whenever a software purchase goes out for bid.

10. The Green Party supports protection of software (free or proprietary) by means of the copyright. We strongly oppose granting of software patents. Mathematical algorithms are discovered, not invented, by humans; therefore, they are not patentable. The overwhelming majority of software patents cover algorithms, and should never have been awarded, or they cover message formats of some kind, which are essentially arbitrary. Format patents only exist to restrain competition, and the harm falls disproportionately on programmers who work independently or for the smallest employers.

### **Nanotechnology**

Nanotechnology—the science of manipulating matter at the molecular level—is poised to provide a new industrial revolution with vast social and environmental consequences. Like nuclear science and biotechnology, nanotechnology is being pursued largely outside of public debate, risking great harm and abuse in its use and application.

The Green Party calls for a halt to nanotechnology development until the following conditions are met:

11. Development of full and open public debate about the implications of nanotechnology and the fusion of nanotech with biological, materials and information sciences.
12. Development of democratic public control mechanisms to regulate the direction of nanotechnology research and development.
13. Expanded research into the environmental and health consequences of exposure to nano-scale materials.
14. Development of technology to contain and monitor nano-scale materials.
15. Development of precautionary safety measures for the containment and control over nano-scale materials.

### **M: National Debt**

#### **OUR POSITION**

Greens will reduce our national debt.

Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama have irresponsibly expanded our national debt by trillions of dollars to finance tax cuts for America's wealthiest citizens, war, corporate welfare and bailouts of Wall Street and the automotive industry. This debt and the interest that must be paid on it is not sustainable.

Working people and the small business community are bearing a disproportionate amount of the federal debt burden. Yet the federal debt is, to a large degree, the end product of tax cuts for the wealthy and big business, and the military-defense industry buildup.

For many years the federal government borrowed trillions of dollars. Money that should have been going into a better "safety net" for the poor, homes for the homeless, environmental and public lands conservation, sustainable jobs, research and development, roads and bridges, schools and the technologies of tomorrow, has been lost to servicing the national debt. We cannot ignore the consequences of our nation's past deficits and the related costs of debt service.

### **GREEN SOLUTIONS**

1. Reduce our national debt by increasing taxes on large corporations, the super-rich and pollution; and decreasing expenditures in some areas, especially for war, armaments and corporate welfare.
2. Oppose privatization of Social Security.
3. Increase funding for green jobs, Social Security, public housing, higher education, public transportation, environmental protection, renewable energy and energy conservation.