

# **46<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Platform 2002**

## **Finalized April 27, 2002**

### **CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

1. Civil rights shall not be compromised for any reason, including the war on terrorism and other tragic events resulting from September 11, 2001. We oppose the erosion of our civil rights that we have witnessed since September 11.
2. We are committed to the attainment of equal civil and human rights for all persons. We stand opposed to discrimination of any kind, and believe that those who suffer the burdens of discrimination must be afforded the legal means and economic opportunities to overcome such injustices. We recognize that prejudices regarding gender, race, age, ethnic origin, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability, or political affiliation are deeply rooted and lingering in our society. It is mere wishful thinking to assume that divisive and dangerous discrimination will disappear of its own accord, without government intervention. Therefore, we support strong affirmative action laws designed to ensure that these prejudices do not prevent qualified persons from obtaining employment, promotion, education, housing, or any other social good; and support meaningful legislation and policies which provide protection from such discrimination. To ensure the principle of equal access, we urge the vigorous enforcement of existing laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Title IX.
3. We implore the Secretary of the Interior to grant a long overdue recognition of the Duwamish Tribe.
4. In a spirit of humanity, we seek the abolition of capital punishment in the State of Washington and the United States of America.
5. Once again, the Democrats of the 46<sup>th</sup> District renew our unity in behalf of every woman's right of reproductive choice. We support the Murray-Slaughter Bill, which makes available RU-486, the "morning after" non-surgical abortion pill.
6. Emphatically, we ask again that the Congress and the legislatures of our United States ratify the Equal Rights Amendment.
7. To give Washington residents who are terminally ill an option to choose how and when to end their lives, the state should enact legislation to permit, with suitable safeguards, medically assisted death with dignity.
8. Nominees for federal judgeships should support the Civil and Human Rights embodied in this platform. Our Senators should only support nominees who have a record that demonstrates a commitment to these core values.

### **CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

1. "If music be the food of love," then, in the spirit of Shakespeare and the other muses, we applaud those artists who seek and need the renewal of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and the Washington State Arts Commission.
2. We seek the reinstatement of individual artist grants from the National Endowments for the Arts.

## **EDUCATION**

1. We support public education that leaves no child behind due to economic conditions, race, sex, or disabilities, as the paramount duty of State Government. A sound and diverse education is a necessary and vital component in the creation of future citizens. Universal access to excellent education is not only the surest path to equality, opportunity, prosperity, and the continuing preservation of our democratic heritage, but also the best means available for eradicating prejudice. To this end, we support an excellent, well-funded public school system.
2. Class size must be reduced.
3. Voters should be able to pass school levies by simple majorities.
4. We oppose private school vouchers because they drain resources from our public education institutions.
5. Bullying by peers or adults shall not be tolerated in any schools in the State of Washington. Bullying is the peer equivalent of child abuse.
6. We oppose commercial advertising in our public schools.
7. We must increase the salaries of public school and higher education instructors, including substitute teachers, instructional assistants and supervisors of substitute personnel.
8. We favor expansion of the school year; 180 days are not sufficient for the education of our students.
9. We favor elimination of standardized tests used for student advancement and funding decisions; i.e., the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). To the extent the WASL is retained, we favor the development of a more meaningfully evaluative test; the testing period should be shortened; and Washington State public school students who are classified as Special Education, English as a Second Language, or Alternative School students should be exempt from the WASL. The curriculum for those students is not tailored to the needs and achievements of other students taking the WASL.
10. We advocate increased funding for public libraries, so they may stay open longer hours on nights and weekends.
11. We emphatically demand that the Washington State Library be retained and adequately funded.
12. We strongly urge increased funding of our two- and four-year institutions of higher learning, student grant and loan programs, and other measures to ensure that the quality of our system of higher education continues to increase and that learning is not reserved for the children of the rich.
13. We support smaller middle schools and urge reduction in size of Seattle's overcrowded middle schools. Overcrowded is defined as more students than facility is designed for.

## **THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY**

1. Clean water is everyone's fundamental right. Allocations of water rights must not supersede society's right to ensure minimum flows for healthy fish populations and ecosystems.
2. Clean air is also everyone's fundamental right. The Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Washington must be supported in their efforts to protect this precious resource. We support a ban on smoking indoors in places open to the public.
3. The use of nuclear and chemical weapons, whether in war, by accident, or as a terrorist tool, remains the greatest catastrophic threat to our environment and our fundamental rights to a healthful environment. We urge the reduction and decommissioning of weapons of mass destruction, ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and START II, and an

immediate mutual effort to reduce nuclear weapons to proposed START III levels. Residents of Washington have the right to live free from fear of cancers, illnesses and catastrophes from the radioactive and toxic waste legacies of the Cold War and from new weapons production. Facilities such as the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, Umatilla Chemical Weapons Depot, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Bangor Nuclear Submarine Base have contaminated our region's water and air and continue to threaten us, future generations, site workers and entire ecosystems. The federal government must clean up those facilities, without spreading their risks, by meeting our state's cleanup and health standards. We oppose any additions to the toxic and radioactive wastes at Hanford, whether from restart of reactors or efforts to make our state a National Radioactive Waste Dump.

4. We favor U.S. participation in developing and enforcing global standards of environmental protection . We oppose exporting banned chemicals like pesticides and herbicides and toxic wastes to Third World countries.
5. We must strengthen and protect the Endangered Species Act and work to protect the viability of and diversity within whole ecosystems and watersheds.
6. We must protect our remaining roadless areas and fortify our standards to manage industrial, commercial and residential growth. We support strengthening the Growth Management Act.
7. The Washington State Legislature must never balance the state transportation budget or any other budget on the back of needed environmental programs. In particular, wetland protection and other regulations protecting wildlife and our natural environment should not be sacrificed for short-term fiscal reasons.
8. Polluters should pay for pollution cleanup. Polluters should not profit at taxpayers expense. We should reinstate the Superfund Tax
9. We advocate increased funding for energy conservation and for the development of renewable alternative energy sources that will decrease global warming.
10. We believe that energy should be priced to sustain its continued supply at a reduced level. We must not steal from the future or burden future generations with the consequences of our energy production and consumption.
11. Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards should be increased and made applicable to light trucks and SUVs.
12. We oppose drilling in Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and wilderness areas and other environmentally sensitive areas.
13. We support individual and governmental efforts to reduce waste and to promote the reuse and recycling of materials. We support the continued development of markets for recycled materials. We support a program of manufacturer deposits on computers and televisions and a safe recycling program by manufacturers that will remove the toxic materials in these items from our landfills and third world countries that aren't set up to safely recycle them.
14. We support efforts to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.
15. We support efforts to reduce use of herbicides and pesticides and other persistent toxic chemicals. We urge sustainable agriculture and organic farming.

### **THE WORKPLACE**

1. We reaffirm our belief in equal pay for equal work.
2. Current and retired state employees are entitled to sufficient cost-of-living increases.
3. We favor raising the state minimum wage.

4. We oppose any legislation, referendum, or initiative that would inhibit or prevent unions from organizing and engaging in collective bargaining. Specifically, we oppose Initiative 777.
5. We support continuing current Prevailing Wage programs and apprentice utilization on public works jobs.

### **THE FAMILY**

1. Homelessness is an outrage in this, the richest country in the world. Resources must be devoted to reducing homelessness and meeting the needs of homeless people.
2. It is not the duty, not should it be the whim, of the federal government to encourage, cajole or induce marriage. Like most other personal decisions, marriage and other personal relationships are private and sacred to the individual and his or her partner.
3. Family planning is an effective tool that must be available to give individuals and families control over their reproductive decisions and to reduce poverty in the U.S. and abroad.
4. We support and recognize the right of lesbian and gay citizens to enter into a legal relationship fully equivalent to marriage, and we advocate repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act.

### **FINANCING OUR NEEDS**

1. The State of Washington must remain fiscally solvent, meet the needs of our citizens, and provide needed services for those least able to afford them.
2. We believe that the State of Washington should have a progressive personal income tax and a progressive corporate income tax.
3. Although the Washington State Legislature has made spot changes to the onerous Initiatives 601 and 695, we believe the time has come to repeal both of them. Furthermore, the initiative process must be reformed so that our elected representatives have the tools they need to make effective revenue and spending decisions.
4. All federal income tax cuts passed in 2001 that are scheduled to take effect in future years should be rescinded.

### **FOREIGN RELATIONS**

1. We must strengthen our efforts to bring about a lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis.
2. For the furtherance of peace in our hemisphere, the United States should normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba. It is way past time to lift the embargo on Cuba and to take proper diplomatic steps toward normalization of relations with our Pan American neighbor.
3. We oppose the lumping together of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "Axis of Evil".
4. We observe that North Korea has shown positive interest in moving toward peace. Progress was being made by Bill Clinton and Madeline Albright during the last administration. We urge the Bush Administration to continue to pursue positive steps toward peace with North Korea.
5. We support a long-term commitment to economic development in Afghanistan.
6. We encourage President Bush to seek diplomatic rather than military solutions to international problems.

## **HEALTH CARE**

1. We urge single-payer health coverage.
2. We support universal physical and mental health care, including prescription drug coverage for all. Such a program could be a key to reducing poverty. We advocate full and equal medical insurance coverage for mental health, physical health and substance abuse treatment.
3. The State of Washington should make every effort to limit price increases or bring about reductions in the cost of prescription drugs.
4. We advocate a livable wage for home health care workers.
5. We must expand the Washington Basic Health Plan.
6. We believe drug and alcohol abuse is a disease and treatment should be available on demand.
7. We favor the legalization of medical marijuana.
8. We favor reinstatement of the Hill-Burton Act, also known as the Hospital Survey Construction Act. The revival of this legislation would enable the Public Health Service to provide hospital care in the face of an emergency or national disaster; services would be available to all citizens without regard to race, creed, gender, nationality, or sexual orientation.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

1. We support the passage of common sense gun safety legislation including closing the gun show loophole and the Whitney Graves bill which requires adults to be responsible for their guns.
2. Drug laws should differentiate between selling small amounts for personal use and selling large amounts as a business. Delivery of one gram or less should be treated the same as possession.
3. Differential sentencing of crack and powder cocaine possession and sale, which results in far harsher sentences for African Americans, should be addressed by lowering the sentences for crack cocaine.
4. Drug courts should be established in every county or region where they are feasible; adequate state funding must be provided for community-based substance abuse treatment in drug court.
5. Drug treatment and community-based aftercare, including clean and sober housing, should be available to every offender who needs it.
6. mental health assessment and treatment, and especially medications, should be available in jails and prisons.
7. Opiate substitution programs, including methadone treatment, should be provided in jails and prisons.
8. We believe in providing state prisoners an education or vocational training to prepare them to be self-supporting.
9. In the matter of drug enforcement, asset seizures should be based on one's conviction and not on arrest or an assumption of guilt.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

1. We advocate the repeal of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Washington State Constitution so that Washington's gasoline tax may be used to fund transit as well as highways.
2. To strengthen our state treasury and, specifically, the transportation budget, we favor the concept of toll roads.

3. We favor the imposition of a luxury tax on the purchase price of deluxe automobiles and limousines, because they use gasoline inefficiently and result in a heavy incidence of wear and tear on the highways.
4. We favor the development and funding of multiple modes of public transportation.
5. North Seattle should be served by mass transit via a monorail or light rail between Northgate and downtown Seattle by 2007.

### **THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION**

1. The reluctance of this administration to share information with our fellow Americans is contrary to the very foundation of our democracy.
2. We reaffirm the constitutional responsibility and duty of the Congress to ask the tough questions. The Legislative Branch is not a rubber stamp for the President. Republicans should not be allowed to stifle legitimate dialogue over presidential policy. The idea that Democratic members of Congress can never raise a question regarding expenditures or policies is antithetical to constructive dialogue between the Executive and Legislative branches of government.
3. The Democratic Party deplores the President's attempts to have secrecy in government. An open society, with measures and legislation openly arrived at, has been the ethic of our American republic since the Founding Fathers established our democracy over 200 years ago, and should remain so.

### **DEMOCRATIC PARTY RESPONSIBILITY**

1. The Democratic Party must adhere to our traditional values of education, health care, environmental protection and the war on poverty.
2. If the Democratic Party's endorsement process is to be meaningful, then the members of the party - particularly those members who are elected officials, party officers, and candidates - should stand behind any and all endorsements. If a member of the Democratic Party who holds or is nominated for office does not support the Party's endorsed candidate(s) for a particular office, then that member is urged to remain mute after the endorsement has occurred.
3. Democrats need to establish a nationwide broadcasting presence to communicate the Party's program to the listening and evaluating public. The Democratic Party needs the media presence to balance the near monopoly of the Conservative Right.
4. We are concerned about the potential negative long-term effects of the Washington State Democratic Party's inadequate attention and devotion of resources to building a powerful and lasting network of grassroots volunteers. We strongly encourage the Washington State Democratic Party and State Party Chair Paul Berendt to work collaboratively with current Legislative District and County Party officers to develop and implement a strategic plan and management policies that will build-up and support Legislative District party organizations and County Party organizations.