



Democratic Party of Georgia Platform

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Democratic Party of Georgia Platform

Guiding Principles

Georgia Democrats believe that the American Dream of opportunity for all should guide government policies at all levels.

Georgia Democrats believe that good decisions by our government promote economic security for all Georgians.

Georgia Democrats believe that creation of good jobs for all Georgians is our top priority.

Georgia Democrats believe that all students should have access to a high quality public education.

Georgia Democrats believe that access to quality, affordable healthcare is a basic, human right.

Georgia Democrats believe that it is our responsibility to leave our children and grandchildren an earth that is safe and livable for future generations.

Georgia Democrats believe all our citizens have the right to safety and security.

Georgia Democrats believe a fundamental role of government is to provide for the national security.

Georgia Democrats believe in and uphold every citizen's right to equal and impartial justice under the law.

Georgia Democrats believe that it is a privilege to serve in elected office, and all who serve should be held to the highest ethical standards.

Preamble

All Americans, regardless of how humble their origins should have an opportunity to achieve the American dream.

We are a diverse state in a diverse nation, and our differences make us strong. Each person, of every race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation can contribute to our country's future.

The Georgia Democratic promise to all its citizens is a dignified quality of life, a quality public education, an affordable healthcare delivery system, assured public safety, an equitable justice system, and equality in economic opportunity.

Georgia Democrats are working to provide an ever improving quality of life for all Georgians.

Platform

I. ECONOMIC SECURITY

Historically, Democrats have stood for the idea that wealth and status should not be an entitlement to exploitation. Democrats recognize that our country and our economy are strongest when they provide opportunity for all Americans—when we grow our country from the bottom up. Democrats are committed to repairing a decade of economic damage by spurring job creation, rebuilding our infrastructure, investing in clean-energy technologies, and restoring fairness and opportunity to our economy.

In support of this Economic Security Platform, Georgia Democrats:

Support free enterprise and the power of market forces, moderated by respect for workers and the environment. Workplaces should be safe and healthy.

Support creation of good jobs for Georgians that provide wages and benefits which enable our families to sustain a quality way of life.

- Affirm that workers should have the right to organize and bargain collectively to ensure fair wages
- Benefits and working conditions
- Affirm the importance of strong work ethic
- Government policies should make work more valuable than welfare

Support a just and equitable tax system in which everyone accepts their personal responsibility for the common good.

Support equal opportunity and non-discrimination in the workplace.

Affirm the state's role in developing vital infrastructure needs such as Georgia's ports, multimodal transportation, and the state's water supply to not only create jobs now but also make Georgia more competitive in the future

Support small businesses as a primary driver of job growth in Georgia.

Encourage energy independence for our country.
Support fair lending practices and condemn predatory lending practices.

Encourage infrastructure development of high speed networks to all homes and businesses so that everyone, especially rural and underserved areas, can have access to the economic power of the Internet.

Support keeping the promise of providing strong Social Security, Medicare, and benefits for those who have worked and contributed to the system all of their lives.

Support providing a strong safety net for Georgians in need such as Medicaid, unemployment benefits, and retraining programs.

Support lifelong learning and retraining as an economic necessity in a competitive global environment.

Affirm the critical importance of agriculture to the Georgia economy and support the inherent value of the family farm.
Support federal immigration and other reforms that will keep in mind agriculture's central role in Georgia's economy.

II. EDUCATION

Democrats recognize education as the most pressing economic issue in America's future, and know we cannot allow our country to fall behind in a global economy. Our country is strongest when our workers are trained with the knowledge and ingenuity to perform at the highest levels.

Georgia Democrats believe quality public schools are vital to Georgia's future in a competitive world. We want every child in Georgia to have the life-long education necessary to succeed through access to a high quality public education.

Students should be educated by caring, qualified teachers with the aid of modern technology in a well-maintained school facility. Good schools benefit everyone and are crucial to a strong economy, good citizenship, and thriving communities. We affirm the critical role of educators and believe teachers should be treated with the respect they deserve.

In support of this Education Platform, Georgia Democrats:

Support the full funding of public education in Georgia.

Support accountability for our schools. Teachers and stakeholders must have a major say in needed improvements and accept their share of responsibility for school outcomes.

Support levels of pay that will attract and retain highly qualified educators.

Affirm the authority of local school boards and communities.

Support expanding access to post secondary education through a HOPE Scholarship program that meets the needs of all Georgians, especially middle class and low income students.

Support the expansion of early childhood education through a Pre-K program that meets the needs of all Georgians, especially middle class and low income students.

Support programs to decrease the achievement gap in Georgia.

Support helping parents and other caregivers in understanding their crucial role in the child's education.

Support fine arts and physical education in our school curriculum.

Support funding for nurses in our schools.

Support ensuring that public education funds are used only for public education.

Support improving graduation rates for students entering college and those entering the work force.

Support a stable, balanced and equitable framework for financing public education. Support increasing the percentage of funding to public schools by the state to avoid undue burdens on local property tax payers. Support the use of locally approved sales taxes only as a supplement to local property taxes for construction and technology needs.

III. HEALTH CARE

We believe that access to quality, affordable healthcare is a basic, human right.

Providers, industry leaders, policymakers, and the general public must join together to implement necessary, fundamental reform and restructuring.

Affordable, quality healthcare is essential to our economic security, a productive and successful workforce, healthy children, and a strong society.

In support of this Health Care Platform, Georgia Democrats:

Support Georgians in making their own healthcare decisions while eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic controls and procedures.

Support technologies and innovations to become more cost efficient in exercising health care options.

Encourage consumer responsibility and participation in health and wellness decision-making.

Support access to quality, affordable healthcare in local communities.

Urge the full funding and reform_of PeachCare so that Georgia children will have access to health insurance.

Encourage development and access to services that will assist vulnerable populations and Georgians in rural communities who have limited access to healthcare systems.

Support the development of early, targeted interventions for special needs populations, especially children and seniors.

Support the improvement of and access to mental health services in our communities.

Support drug rehabilitation programs to decrease both long-term health costs and penal system costs.

Support improvement in care for our veterans.

Support funding of home healthcare programs as an alternative to long-term nursing home care.

Support opportunities to make Georgia the premier health research location in the country by partnering with private enterprise and our_research universities, including embryonic stem cell research.

IV. Natural Resources

Stewardship and protection of the earth is our sacred trust. We have a responsibility to leave our children and grandchildren an earth that is safe, livable and healthy for generations to come. We should be able to eat the fish in our waters, and to know the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the foods we eat are safe so that our children will have a healthy future.

We should preserve natural areas in Georgia so that we do not have to travel hours from our homes to hunt, fish, hike, or watch wildlife.

**In support of this Natural Resources Platform,
Georgia Democrats:**

Encourage conservation and innovation to promote efficient use of our natural resources.

Affirm the right of every Georgia citizen to clean, safe, air and water.

Support responsible use and allocation of existing water resources, and pursuit of extending our water resources through other means such as construction of new reservoirs and implementing water efficiency policies.

Support the preservation of public lands and wildlife areas to provide all Georgians with easy access the natural wonders of our beautiful state.

Support the reduction of greenhouse gases while moving to new technologies that will create new jobs for Georgians. This will make a positive change to the environment, grow new industries, reduce energy costs, significantly reduce greenhouse gasses, and be completely sustainable.

Support the common sense rules for protecting our natural resources such as those passed a generation ago that made our air and water cleaner and saved wildlife from being driven to extinction.

Support the protection of the environment by encouraging a balance between good stewardship of the earth and good business.

V. PUBLIC SAFETY

Georgia Democrats believe all our citizens have the right to safety and security and the efforts to protect this right is one of the main responsibilities of state and local governments.

In support of this Public Safety Platform, Georgia Democrats:

Support adequate funding for prisons and jails with an emphasis on reducing recidivism through proper rehabilitation programs, including education and training.

Affirm that illegal drugs and gangs pose an imminent threat to our communities and that state and local governments should take decisive action to prevent substance abuse, treat addiction and enforce existing laws.

Support adequate funding of the Georgia State Patrol, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and state crime labs.

Support parents efforts to protect their children from exploitation, including the use of technology by predators.

Support anti-cyber bullying efforts to protect victims from harassment.

VI. NATIONAL SECURITY

Georgia Democrats have a long history of support for our national defense. We are proud of the legacy of Senator Richard Russell and Senator Sam Nunn in supporting a strong national defense.

We believe a fundamental role of government is to provide for the national security. We support the courageous men and women in the armed forces who protect our country. Supporting our armed forces means sending them to war only when we have no other option.

It is imperative that we take good care of our service members, veterans, and their families in recognition of their service and sacrifice.

In support of this National Security Platform, Georgia Democrats:

Believe it is our responsibility to protect the citizens of the State of Georgia from terrorists, both domestic and foreign, and the efforts to do so should be supported politically and financially.

Are committed to equal treatment of all service members and believe all Georgians should be allowed to serve our country without discrimination.

Believe that protecting Georgia's critical infrastructure is paramount for maintaining not only our state's security but also our country's security.

Believe that those wishing to enter the United States legally, and be productive members of our communities, should be allowed to do so. We support measures to monitor those wishing to gain access to this country and efforts to ensure that those crossing our borders are not threats to our nation's security.

Support allowing immigrants to attain legal status or citizenship in numbers necessary to contribute to our nation's economy and the economy of the State of Georgia

VII. JUSTICE

Georgia Democrats are firmly committed to upholding and protecting the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Georgia. We uphold every citizen's right to equal and impartial justice under the law.

We believe that life and liberty are equally important and that there are areas of personal privacy and freedom into which government intrusion should be limited. These areas include personal decisions about one's health, religious beliefs, personal relationships and family life.

Laws should be crafted to benefit the common good without unduly restricting individual liberty. Government must protect the

rights of all minorities and the integrity of the democratic process. Furthermore, government has the responsibility to protect all its citizens from discrimination and harassment

A working system of checks and balances is essential to maintain an effective government and protect our liberty.

In support of this Justice Platform, Georgia Democrats:

Recognize that liberty cannot survive without fair, impartial justice.

Believe that laws are to be crafted to benefit the common good of society without unduly restricting individual freedom.

Affirm that the impartial and efficient operation of our court system is necessary for the administration of justice. It is our responsibility to support court operations to ensure the fair and equal treatment of those coming before the court.

Support drug rehabilitation programs as a more effective means to reduce both drug abuse and the costs of incarceration.

Support both adequate funding and careful monitoring of the public defender system.

Support hate crime legislation to increase criminal penalties for acts of violence or intimidation committed because of a victim's race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, gender, or disability.

Support federal and Georgia state legislation to remove unfair restrictions on workers to organize unions in the workplace. Support enforcement of existing labor laws that protect workers.

Support working with our international partners to improve and uphold treaties to protect human rights.

Support legislation that advances workplace equality to ensure that all Georgians have the opportunity to live the American Dream.

Support legislation to allow promising young people a chance to contribute to our great country through the “Dream Act.”

VIII. INTEGRITY IN GOVERNMENT

Georgia Democrats believe that it is a privilege to serve in elected office, and all who serve should be held to the highest ethical standards. Government derives its power not from the special interests or from major campaign contributors, but from the people. We insist on fairness, openness and integrity in our government and a fair and trustworthy election process.

In support of this Integrity in Government Platform, Georgia Democrats:

Support open government and public access to public business.

Deplore the pervasive influence of money in governmental actions and call for effective limits on gifts and expenditures for lobbying purposes to elected officials, their staff, and state employees.

Support adequate funding and staffing of ethics regulating agencies in Georgia with protection for whistleblowers from political or personal retribution.

Oppose those over-zealous restrictions that impede the legislative process and effectively disenfranchise voters.

Support an open, verifiable voting system that maximizes participation by Georgia voters.

Conclusion

Georgia Democrats call on all Georgians to unite behind the principles of good government to face the challenges of our times. We believe that America's promise is ongoing with enduring values. Georgia's Democrats are determined to renew America's most basic premise: opportunity to every American, and responsibility from every American.