Delaware Democratic Party Platform

The Delaware Democratic Party believes that government is accountable to all Delawareans, and that public funds are the people’s money. We believe that government must exercise wise and prudent stewardship of funds raised from Delaware taxpayers, and that taxes should be kept low for working and middle-class Delawareans.

We believe that it is government's responsibility, as custodians of the public health and welfare, to protect the air, land, and water of our state. We believe that government has a duty to invest in the future of our state by providing quality education for all of Delaware’s youth. We believe that economic opportunity is crucial to the wellbeing of every Delawarean, and that measures encouraging economic growth can be compatible with a safe and healthy environment.

We believe in the innate dignity of all Americans, and that our rights as Americans apply to each and every Delaware citizen. We believe our citizens have the right to feel safe in their communities, and support measures to prevent crime, and protect Delawareans from those who would commit crimes, as well as from those who would abuse power.

We believe that inclusiveness is vital to our collective strength. We pledge to recruit and organize at all levels of government, because a government that utilizes this strength to guarantee rights and services is more influential and effective than leaving people to fend for themselves.

We believe we are stronger when we have an economy that works for everyone—an economy that grows incomes for working people, creates good-paying jobs, and puts a middle class life within reach for more Delawareans. We need an economy that prioritizes long-term investment over short-term profit-seeking, rewards the common interest over self-interest, and promotes innovation and entrepreneurship.

We, the Democratic Party of Delaware, dedicate ourselves to maintaining and improving our leadership in government. We encourage participation of all Delawareans in our party. We support candidates that promote personal freedom, economic and educational opportunity, efficient and effective government, and justice for all. We believe that cooperation is better than conflict, unity is better than division, empowerment is better than resentment, and bridges are better than walls.
1. **Middle Class Economics**: Delaware Democrats are advocates of a strong middle class. We believe that we are stronger when the economy works for everyone, and we strive to break down barriers holding Delawareans back.
   a. **Working Families**: We strongly support equal pay for equal work and fair wages for all. The Delaware Democratic Party understands the importance of providing paid family and medical leave, particularly for parents caring for a new child or for those addressing a personal or family member’s serious health issue. We believe it is necessary to make quality childcare more affordable and to expand and strengthen the home health care workforce.
   b. **Home Ownership**: In order to increase the amount of homeowners in Delaware, we believe in increasing the supply of affordable rental housing and encouraging homeownership, particularly for first-time homebuyers. We must dedicate resources to building new sustainable homes and updating existing homes to be more energy efficient.

2. **Good Paying Jobs**: Delaware Democrats support conditions that lead to good paying jobs with fair wages and comprehensive benefits to improve the middle class. We are committed to building strong and sustained economic growth.
   a. **Infrastructure**: We need to invest in our deteriorating infrastructure in order to reverse the decline of the middle class. Delaware Democrats are proponents of putting Delawareans to work updating and expanding our roadways, bridges, rails lines, and public transit.
   b. **Wages**: No one who works full time should have to struggle to provide for their family. Delaware Democrats support our state’s working families and strongly believe in a $15 minimum wage and the right of workers to organize, to form a union if the majority so choose, and collectively bargain, regardless of where they work. The rights of workers to bargain collectively for better wages and benefits have been under attack, and therefore we oppose any anti-worker “right to work” legislation.
   c. **Clean Energy Jobs**: Delaware must invest in clean energy to become more competitive nationally and globally. Delaware Democrats promote energy independence and energy efficiency. These new technologies are already transforming our state’s economy, and harnessing these forces will create good paying jobs.
   d. **Small Business**: The Delaware Democratic Party strongly supports small businesses and entrepreneurship, and we need to make it easier for them to succeed. Small businesses are engines of opportunities, particularly for minority communities. We should discard unreasonable regulations, target
funding for small businesses in underserved communities, and provide tax relief and simplification in order to grow jobs faster in Delaware.

3. **Economic Fairness**: Delaware Democrats believe Delaware and America are strongest when the middle class is thriving. Increasingly economic gains are accruing solely to the rich, which we believe is both corrosive to our democracy and deleterious to our economy. All means to ensure the economy works for everyone should be utilized, ranging from wage insurance to easily accessible job training programs.
   a. **Wall Street Reform**: Financial reform is necessary to rein in Wall Street excesses. We applaud the progress made by President Obama in this area and believe we need to build on those efforts, not reverse them. Wall Street should never again be allowed to wreck Main Street.
   b. **Expansion of Dodd-Frank**: We believe in a vigorous effort to reduce corporate concentration. Steadily increasing corporate concentration distorts the market and results in higher costs and less choice for consumers. Democrats believe in a competitive marketplace, not one wherein consumers suffer due to redistributions caused by monopolies and near monopolies.
   c. **Tax Code Reform**: The wealthy should pay their fair share of taxes to promote economic equality. The Delaware Democratic Party believes in a tax code that rewards work, not wealth, and removes tax breaks for the wealthy and corporations which intensify inequality in our society. We believe in tax relief for working families and changes to the tax code to help families get ahead, such as refundable tax credit.

4. **Removing Barriers to Opportunity**: Delaware Democrats believe everyone deserves the same opportunities for success, and we must lift up communities that have traditionally been left behind. Our state is stronger when we work together.
   a. **Addressing Racism**: The Delaware Democratic Party will fight to end systematic and institutional racism throughout Delaware. Our public policies need to promote racial justice through fair, just, equitable, and impactful practices that encourage righting past inequities.
   b. **Criminal Justice Reform**: In Delaware, we are committed to true criminal justice reform and ending mass incarceration. As a Party, Delaware Democrats will work tirelessly to rebuild bonds of trusts between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Delaware, home of the author of the Violence Against Women Act, must be committed to combatting violence against women. We also believe in the eradication of
all forms of human trafficking and modern slavery, including the commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor of men, women, and children. We need to ensure protections and services for survivors of violence and trafficking.

c. Wealth Inequality: Delaware Democrats stand for removing the racial wealth gap that exists in our state. Delaware Democrats believe we need to eliminate systemic barriers to wealth accumulation across different racial groups by improving opportunities for people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds through implementing policies that increase homeownership, increase access to high quality jobs and education, and train our workers for the jobs of the future.

d. Immigration Reform: Our country was founded on immigration and ideals of liberty and religious freedom, and we believe that we must be unwavering in our aim for diversity and inclusivity. The Delaware Democratic Party believes in cultivating a safe, welcoming community for everyone to have access to a good-paying job, quality education, and affordable housing. We support smart immigration policies that promote legal immigration for those seeking a better life and those seeking refuge from violence and oppression. Delaware Democrats also believe in collaboration between local law enforcement agencies and Federal authorities in implementation of fair and just immigration policies.

e. Poverty: Delaware Democrats advocate for eliminating persistent poverty throughout our state. We support fighting poverty by implementing policies that use targeted data to build empowerment zones, enacting anti-hunger campaigns, and supporting investment in small businesses, youth employment programs, and reentry services.

f. LGBTQ: Delaware Democrats we will continue to fight for healthcare access and non-discrimination laws to protect the LGBTQ community.

5. Government Transparency/Voting Rights/Campaign Finance Reform:
Delaware Democrats believe that a core principle of the Party is to maximize voter participation for all Delawareans. We will fight for real campaign finance reform to keep big money from drowning out the voices of everyday Delawareans, and we must have the necessary tools to fight back and safeguard our electoral and political integrity.

a. Responsible Government: The Delaware Democratic Party believes that every Delaworean should be confident in the stewardship of government. We need to tackle fiscal waste, fraud, and abuse to ensure government dollars are spent wisely and efficiently. Government should be well managed, open, responsive, and accountable, with particular focus on
transparency in campaign finance and public officials’ compensation. Delaware Democrats believe in sound fiscal practices, with public access at all levels to government financial records.

b. Voting Rights: Ensuring and expanding the right to vote is a core value of the Democratic Party. We believe that we should make it easier to vote by expanding early voting and voting by mail, automatically registering citizens to vote, implementing same day voter registration, and ending partisan and racial gerrymandering. Democrats are dedicated to fighting against discriminatory voter identification laws.

c. Campaign Finance – We support constitutional amendments to overturn Citizens’ United and Buckley v. Valeo. We need to amplify the voices of the American people through a small donor matching public financing system. We need to overhaul and strengthen the Federal Election Commission so that there is real enforcement of campaign finance laws. And we need to fight to eliminate super PACs and outside spending abuses, including transparency of donors.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Justice: Delaware Democrats share a deep commitment to protecting our environment and tackling climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the use of clean energy and energy independence.

a. Clean Energy Development and Implementation: The Delaware Democratic Party supports efforts to transition our energy supply to distributed and centralized renewable sources. We recognize the critical need for requiring existing generation facilities to meet environmental standards and to offer incentives to decrease transportation energy needs. We must make our existing infrastructure safer and cleaner, while also building the infrastructure necessary to power clean energy.

b. Environmental Justice: Delaware Democrats believe in the right to clean air and water for all Americans. We understand that climate change and pollution disproportionately affect low-income communities and communities of color. We need to prioritize hiring and training workers to clean up the toxic brownfields that have polluted our state, and we must expand clean energy, energy efficiency, and resilient infrastructure.

c. Protection of Public Land & Water: We must partner with our state’s farmers to be effective in keeping our air and water clean, combating climate change, and ensuring the health of our agricultural lands. The conservation of Delaware’s waterways and public lands are critical to ensuring the health and wellbeing of all Delawareans and the natural wildlife. We believe that we need policies and investments that will keep
these areas clean and protected, while also harnessing the immense social and economic potential of our public lands and waters.

7. **Provide Quality Affordable Education:** The Delaware Democratic Party firmly believes that quality and affordable early learning and debt-free college must be the birthright of every child.
   a. **Debt-free College:** Cost should not be a barrier to getting a degree or credential, and debt should not hold graduates back. Bold new investments by the federal government, coupled with states reinvesting in higher education and colleges holding the line on costs, should ensure that Americans of all backgrounds will be prepared for the jobs and economy of the future.
   b. **Affordable Early Learning:** Democrats are dedicated to creating the best-educated population and workforce in the world. This means making early childhood education and universal preschool a priority, especially in light of new research showing how impactful early learning can be for creating life-long success.
   c. **Support Our Educators:** We support policies that motivate rather than demoralize our educators. Delaware Democrats are committed to ensuring that schools that educate children in poverty are treated fairly. We support accountability that reveals the many opportunity gaps facing students from low-income communities.

8. **Health & Safety of Americans:** Delaware Democrats strongly believe in universal health care coverage. We are proud of being the Party of Medicare, Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program and the Affordable Care Act. We need to build on these achievements, not weaken or gut them, and move ever closer to universal health care while improving quality and reducing costs in the healthcare system. Delaware Democrats believe in reproductive rights and in promoting women’s health. We support measures to reduce gun violence and to reduce substance abuse. We stand for the following:
   a. **Universal Healthcare:** We believe Delaware and America should continue on the road toward greater access to health care, not reverse the tide. Our goal of expanding access to care includes access to mental health services and access to care for disabled individuals. Delaware Democrats oppose efforts to repeal the ACA, and rather support preservation and improvement, including Medicaid expansion. We firmly believe an insurance company should not be allowed to deny coverage to an individual due to a pre-existing condition and in community rating to protect such individuals from higher costs. Delaware Democrats support
federal passage of a public option to promote competition in health care markets and provide consumers with greater choice and more affordability. This includes reducing the cost of prescription drugs and sensible reforms to allow greater access to care.

b. Drug/Alcohol Addiction Services: The plight of drug and alcohol abuse is ravaging many communities. We must enact safeguards for those affected by the opioid crisis. We believe in continuing and expanding efforts in Delaware to tackle these problems.

c. Preventing Gun Violence: Gun violence is taking far too many lives in Delaware. Delaware Democrats endorse common sense gun safety measures while respecting responsible gun ownership. We will build on successful efforts at the state level and proposed efforts at the federal level to get weapons of war off our streets.

d. Mental Health Care: The Delaware Democratic Party recognizes that good mental health is critical to all people, and therefore we must treat mental health issues with the same care and seriousness that we treat physical health issues. It is also imperative that we expand community-based treatment for mental health conditions and substance abuse disorders, and create awareness about suicide prevention.

e. Reproductive Rights: We believe in a woman’s right to make healthcare decisions for herself and the ability to access appropriate healthcare for all women. We oppose efforts to limit access to healthcare services and to defund reproductive and women’s health care providers. The ACA prohibition on gender-based discrimination by health insurers must be preserved.

9. **Support Troops and Care for Veterans:** Delaware Democrats believe we have moral responsibility to keep faith with all of our veterans and wounded warriors. We must take care of those who have put their lives on the line to defend us.

   a. Expand Military Family Services: Delaware Democrats honor the sacrifice of military families who serve alongside our service members. We will support military families with jobs, education, childcare, and health care. We will promote family-friendly policies and champion efforts to care for our military family members, especially for the spouses and children who have to rebuild their lives after the loss of a loved one or life-altering injury or disability.

   b. Care for Veterans: Delaware Democrats will fight for every veteran to have timely access to high-quality health care and processing of claims and appeals.
c. Assistance Programs for Homeless Veterans: Delaware Democrats believe we should provide resources to fight the chronic issues of homelessness for so many of our veterans.

10. Global Threats:
   a. Corporate Entities & LLC's – transparency in filing: National security officials have warned against potential secret ownership of companies in critical areas such as energy production, electric grids, communication and transportation infrastructure. There is also major concern about the use of Limited Liability companies to secretly launder funds to be used by terrorist and criminal groups. Delaware Democrats support revisions of State Corporate Law to require screening and identification of all persons and nations seeking to establish an LLC under Delaware statutes.