



Douglas County Democratic Party 2020 Platform

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PART I - PROLOGUE

The DCDP Platform is organized around the values that all humans share, regardless of political affiliation. We identify these core values as *Protection*, *People*, and *Prosperity*. We all need to have our basic safety and security needs met before we can strive for a more meaningful life. Then we can focus on forming connections with others and working toward a more prosperous future. We recognize that each of these values are important, and that people are free to prioritize these values in different ways. We also recognize that with that freedom comes the responsibility to use it wisely. Placing a high priority on one of these values can come at the expense of the others, not only for ourselves, but for others affected by our decisions. Through this platform, we strive to achieve an optimal balance between these values.

Protection

Protection involves achieving safety and security for our citizens so they can lead fulfilling and prosperous lives. Doing so benefits not only themselves, but all those whom their connections and achievements touch. This starts with ensuring that our environment is a safe place to live for ourselves and future generations. It also involves having a strong military and strategic goals to ensure the security of our nation. Finally, it involves ensuring that all our people have access to quality physical and mental health care so they are in the best position to achieve other necessary goals. Because safety and security are our most basic needs, we naturally cling to our comfort zones and make decisions out of fear without sufficient thought to the impact those decisions have on others. However, we strive to overcome these basic human tendencies and advocate for policies that guarantee safety and security for all individuals. We also recognize that when others have their basic needs met, they are less likely to engage in behaviors that place our safety and security at risk.

People

We believe that our lives are enhanced by creating a community grounded in dignity for all human beings. We believe that all members of our society have added value, and that their voices are worth being heard. This starts with the basic tenet that every human being in our nation is entitled to the same rights and level of respect. Their needs and perspectives are no less valid than our own, and they deserve that empathy and validation. We also recognize that our world is based in complex social networks, and that we are reliant on one another to meet each other's needs and lead fulfilling lives. As trust is paramount in these social networks, we believe that our government should be comprised of public servants who place honesty and transparency in highest regard and operate from a shared set of facts.

Prosperity

We believe that all human beings have the right to strive for a more prosperous existence, and that equitable opportunity should exist for all. This does not ensure equality of outcome for all, but it fulfills the promise that hard work can lead to prosperity, and removes systemic barriers in our society that make this dream less possible for some than it is for others. We believe that the government can and should play a role in guaranteeing equitable opportunity, and that taking proactive measures to do so is more cost-effective than not. We believe in using technological advances to make these dreams attainable for anyone who chooses to reach for them. We also recognize that technological advances increasingly lead to renewable resources, and that increasing opportunity for those who have less does not have to come at the expense of those in power who already have more.

PART II - PLATFORM

Human And Civil Rights

We believe in the infinite dignity of all people. All people, regardless of race, religion, sex, age, ethnic origin, disability, or sexual preference, must be afforded equal rights under the law. They should be able to marry whomever they want, and they should be able to work in a safe, non-discriminatory environment while enjoying equal opportunity and equal pay. All people should have control over their bodies; be able to define their own gender; decide, when terminally ill, the appropriate time to die notwithstanding outsiders' conceptions of dignity; have the ability to decide if and when they will have children with no discrimination in insurance coverage; and practice any religion or none. These rights should not be infringed upon by any employer or government.

Education

An educated population is a cornerstone of our democracy. We believe a high-quality, comprehensive public education is essential to the development of a healthy, happy, and productive individual, and should be conceptualized as a core component of health and human services. We must ensure that our education system is designed to proactively evaluate and foster skill development across multiple domains related to human maturation. Additionally, materials used for public education should be research-based and follow best practices.

In the service of achieving these goals, we believe that education begins, and is most impactful, in the earliest years in life. Therefore, high-quality public preschool needs to be available to all children in order to create equitable access to opportunities.

We believe that the term "education" has been too narrowly defined and has not included other important aspects of human maturation. This means that schools should be responsible for not only academic skill development, but also social, emotional, physical, and adaptive skill development.

Our current education system maintains the problem of making socio-economic mobility extremely challenging. In order to address that, we support an equitable distribution of educational funds based upon the needs of children, including in the provision of all special education and gifted and talented resources; and fully funding public education, including preschool and full-day kindergarten through grade 12.

Special education law and related funding should reflect best practices per existing evidence, including social/emotional learning programs, teacher and staff training, evaluation of students suspected of having special needs, and intervention that promotes not only academic success, but also social and emotional well-being.

Higher education and trade schools should be accessible and affordable for everyone in order to ensure that people are able to discover and contribute their maximum talents, skills, and passions to our society. When people are engaged in meaningful activity, the well-being of our society increases exponentially.

In order to ensure that we are recruiting and maintaining exceptional people to work in our schools, we support compensation for teachers and staff that is no less than the national average, commensurate with their education, and class sizes that are consistent with research-based best practices.

School safety is an issue we must address both proactively and reactively. In order to address the problems that already exist, we believe the best way to ensure safety in our schools is through evidence-based mental health and physical safety measures. This includes hiring and training enough

school staff to recognize and triage identified problems and at-risk students. In order to prevent problems related to school safety from continuing to multiply, we must also expand the scope of our academic programs to implement high-quality social/emotional learning programs that provide students with the tools to appropriately socialize, connect with others, and cope with their emotions in adaptive ways. This means addressing problems regardless of perceived impact of those problems on academic functioning (i.e., considering social, emotional, behavioral, and adaptive functioning as well).

International

The United States should continue to be a participating member of the United Nations and abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We should continue to partner with the World Health Organization “whose primary role is to direct international health within the United Nations’ system and to lead partners in global health responses.” This Health Organization is involved in both physical and mental health issues.

We should continue to provide funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and its scientific work. The CDC home page describes its work as: “Working 24/7 to protect America from health and safety threats, both foreign and domestic.”

We support the use of military action only as a last resort after attempts at diplomacy and sanctions have been exhausted. We oppose sanctions whose impact mostly or wholly affect ordinary civilians, i.e., food restrictions, medical supplies, etc. We oppose the use of nuclear, chemical, biological, and other weapons of mass destruction.

Immigration

Our immigration values are based upon treating all people, including immigrants, in a humanitarian manner with the equal protection and due process provided by our Constitution and Bill of Rights. We believe we need to have effective security at our borders that does not allow criminals or terrorists to enter our country.

Visas should be issued based upon compliance with U.S. law and not biased by race, color, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. Legal immigration should be expanded and used as a tool to create jobs and businesses, and to grow our economy.

The refugee cap should be based upon our resources, the needs of refugees, and our ability to meet those needs. The acceptance of refugees should not be biased by nationality, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

Asylum seekers must be treated with dignity and humanity. We support the creation of a well-resourced and independent immigration court system to adjudicate asylum claims more quickly.

We support the establishment of a path to citizenship for undocumented individuals and families who are living in the United States but do not currently have a means to acquire U.S. citizenship.

We support strengthening labor protections for immigrant workers vulnerable to abuse, including temporary workers or guest workers, to end exploitative practices by employers.

Voting, Elections & Campaign Finance

Douglas County voters expect their voices to be heard during elections. A healthy democracy should be broad-based, with each person having an equal voice in deciding who represents them. Elections are our fundamental means of ensuring that our local, state and national governments are operating in accordance with our values and priorities. Colorado has some of the best election laws in the country. However, some challenges remain to the exercising of voting rights, including making it difficult for People of Color, people of lower socioeconomic means, people with disabilities, and language differences to register to vote and/or cast their vote. Furthermore, the current system allows those with more money to have a more powerful voice in decisions about who their candidates are and how their campaigns are run, leaving average voters feeling hopeless about their ability to make a difference. It also makes it difficult for those without the financial means to run for and/or hold office, thereby narrowing the field of qualified candidates.

We support safeguarding our election process so it truly reflects the will of the American people. This requires that we support policies that ensure that every citizen has equal access to their voting rights. We also support policies that ensure easy access to voting materials and locations for all Americans, We believe proportional representation is important as is fair and non-partisan redistricting.

We believe that it is critical that the influence of money be removed from the campaign process when possible, and that it be transparently disclosed when not. Such changes will reinforce the faith of the American public that all voices matter equally, and it will ensure that qualified candidates are able to run for office without their voices being drowned out by others with big special-interest donors.

Health

We believe that healthcare is a human right that is fundamental to the pursuit of happiness and the achievement of personal goals, as well as to the ability to contribute to the betterment of society. We support the implementation of an equitable healthcare system that guarantees the right to comprehensive but affordable healthcare to all people, regardless of race, religion, sex, age, ethnic origin, sexual preferences, or socioeconomic status.

We believe that individuals should have access to the providers and types of care they choose, regardless of their socioeconomic status or any changes to their employment status.

We believe that medical decisions should be made by providers and patients, based on the available scientific evidence and the experience of providers, without influence from profit-motivated third parties. We believe in ongoing research on cost-cutting measures.

We believe in the adoption of a “wellness” model for access to healthcare rather than an “illness” model. Access to preventative care, early diagnostics, ongoing care and services, while costly on the front end, is not as costly as treating medical conditions that could have been prevented. We further recognize that the transition to such a system is likely to be difficult and time-consuming, and needs to consider the perspectives of all stakeholders.

We believe that, in order to create true parity for mental health and other Allied Health Professions, our healthcare system must remove the artificial distinction between medical, behavioral, dental, vision, and other forms of care.

We believe that the primary goal when making decisions about the structure of our healthcare system should be to provide comprehensive healthcare to all Americans, and that decision-making should

therefore be made on the basis of scientific evidence rather than the influence of powerful lobbyists (e.g., pharmaceutical and insurance industries).

Energy

We believe that our future lies with clean and renewable energy which will prevent pollution, promote national security, create jobs and investment, and provide Americans with huge health and cost savings. We promote family-sustaining, regenerative, healthy, safe, and local clean energy jobs.

Environmental Justice

We believe that clean air, clean water, a clean environment, and a sustainable planet are essential rights and goals we should strive for, both as citizens and as a government. These impact our health, our happiness, our economy, and our joint national security now and for future generations. We believe that experts and scientists, who are in consensus that climate change is real, should be leaned on to help transition us to where we have to go. This means bold leadership, imagination, and expertise from our policy experts, but also a strong connecting vision of what a clean future would look like.

We support the rapid transition from fossil fuels and their subsidies to 100% renewable energy as is scientifically and economically possible. In this we support prioritization of clean, renewable energy development and community resilience programs in low-income communities and communities of color that have historically borne the brunt of industrial pollution.

We support developing retraining and transitional support for employees in the fossil fuel energy sector,

Given our reliance on groundwater, we support responsible water use in our community and solutions to secure a sustainable, renewable water supply for the future. These include regular water testing and guidance from local scientists on the best ways to maximize the safety and security of our water.

We support promoting programs and incentives to shift from a globalized industrial food system that contributes significantly to the climate crisis, to a more localized, resilient food system (family farms and ranches) that can help build and sequester carbon in soils and reduce fossil fuel dependence.

Colorado provides unmatched natural, scenic, recreational, and economic wildlife opportunities for present and future generations. We strongly support legislation, proposed and introduced, to permanently protect wild lands and wildlife as experts in the field suggest. We also follow experts as it pertains to an Animal Bill of Rights that protects animals, including humane treatment and humane slaughter.

We support the development and investment into technology that helps us respond to the climate crisis and pollution in our communities. Examples of this include: funding for research on climate change, safe methods to remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, improved renewable energy power storage, modern recycling, and agricultural techniques that maximize resilience. We support a process of oversight and best practices to be taken in our energy and resource sectors along with programs to provide public knowledge of what information is gathered, and an information campaign on what markers we want to reach, how, and why.

Economy, Fiscal and Monetary Policy, and Labor

We support market-oriented economics but believe the state needs to intervene to preserve the competitive market and make it work more effectively for the majority of people in society. The economy should work toward maximizing human well-being, not just corporate profit.

Our regulations should pursue economic and social responsibility while not stifling the profit motive, economic freedom, or individual liberty. We need to thoughtfully regulate antitrust enforcement and regulate our industries to create a competitive and level playing field.

We need to better manage our responses to globalization and automation so our labor force can adapt to the realities of the future economy.

We need to retain fiscal discipline. We recognize that too much debt at the federal, state, local or individual levels can be catastrophic to our economy. We need to identify the policies and programs we support and face the hard decisions to determine how we plan to fund them.

We encourage expanding international trade.

Growth

Growth will happen whether it's wanted or not. We believe in a proactive approach to planning for and managing growth so current residents' needs and our infrastructure are not overwhelmed by population growth.

Long-term plans need to be made for which areas can best accommodate dense growth, public transportation, or walkable neighborhoods, which areas are better suited to parks, open space, or wildlife corridors, and which areas should have single family homes. Land-use planning needs to balance short-term and long-term interests and the needs of the community.

We support incentivizing developers to build multi-tiered, multi-generational, affordable housing so teachers, law enforcement officers, nurses, cooks, etc. can afford to live in the community in which they work.

Future water supply and needs should be among the top considerations when planning where growth can be sustained. New development projects should have long-term water source solutions.

Transportation plans should be accessible, multimodal, minimize environmental impact, be effective, and accommodate high-growth and high-traffic areas.

Social Security

We support the protection and self-sustainability of Social Security, and we believe action needs to be taken to ensure the long-term sustainability of Social Security without decreasing both Social Security and Medicare benefits. Social Security provides not only an essential need, but also an economic stimulus to local economies.

Youth Debt

Youth debt is a crisis in America greatly harming future generations' ability to fully access the American dream. We support the establishment of programs to help young people clear their college debt.

Criminal Justice

Mass incarceration has aptly been compared to Jim Crow laws. Because our criminal justice system is innately racist, we believe that legislators should repeal laws and penalties that discriminate against minorities or the poor, directly or indirectly. We support the efforts to reduce jail time for lower level offenses. We believe that people should not have to pay for their arrest, processing, arraignment, trial, or incarceration. We believe the death penalty should be repealed.

Firearms

We believe that guns must be regulated and owners should be responsible for their firearms. Gun violence is preventable, and we believe in working to create a community of responsible gun ownership.

Veterans

We believe in showing our gratitude to our veterans for their service by ensuring superb and timely care.

Science And Technology

We believe scientific and technological progress can profoundly improve the quality of human life. We also recognize that technology can be misused in ways that diminish our rights and our opportunities. We therefore advocate for the continued responsible use of science and technology as a force for good in the world. In particular, we believe individuals have the right to control and protect their personal information.

Part III - Policies & Positions

The following list contains examples of policies and positions on issues that are derived from our values and platform priorities. Footnotes indicate the platform planks that pertain to these policies and positions.

- We oppose passage and implementation of any “personhood” law.^{1,6}
- We support the regulation of all healthcare providers including crisis pregnancy centers.^{1,6}
- We support implementation of affirmative action policies for people with disabilities.^{1,9}
- We oppose any bill that would amend Title III of the ADA to add a notice requirement.^{1,6}
- We believe materials used for public education should be research-based and follow best practices. This includes comprehensive, age-appropriate, science-based sexual education at all levels.^{2,6}
- In the service of ensuring that people gain not only academic skills, but also basic life skills:
 - We support financial literacy education, including responsible use of credit, basic knowledge of investments, and the importance of savings.^{2,9}
 - We support ensuring curricula for students includes nonpartisan basic civics, including but not limited to: the role of government, how a bill becomes law, and the importance of voting in all elections, in order to break down barriers between government and the younger generations.^{2,5}
 - We support bilingual and multicultural education programs for everyone starting at an early age.^{1,2,3}
- We support the provision of, and adequate funding for the fine and performing arts, physical education, technology, health, and sports sciences.^{2,6,14}
- We support expanding opportunities by funding vocational education and alternatives to college programs.^{2,9}
- We believe in strengthening and funding IDEA to require specialized services and accommodations to address problems identified in evaluations. This means addressing problems regardless of perceived impact of those problems on academic functioning (i.e., considering social, emotional, behavioral, and adaptive functioning as well).^{2,6,9}
- We believe that school staff should have the training necessary to effectively triage identified problems.^{2,6}
- We believe that schools should be required to provide for a comprehensive evaluation of students identified as at-risk to ensure that problems are appropriately conceptualized and served.^{2,6}
- We believe in promoting public/private partnerships between schools and community resources to ensure that evaluation and intervention services are still available to students even when the expertise and resources are not available within the school district.^{2,6,9}

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- We believe that public school funding should stay in public schools and not be diverted to private schools through school voucher programs.
- We believe that schools should be responsible for (and receive appropriate funding for) implementing high-quality social/emotional learning programs that provide students with the tools to appropriately socialize, connect with others, and cope with their emotions in adaptive ways. Such programming can help prevent anxiety, depression, suicide, violence, and substance use.^{2,6}
- We believe that counselors should be available to students in accordance with research-based recommendations (i.e., no more than 250 students per counselor).^{2,6}
- We should expand family reunification, making it easier for relatives of citizens and green card holders to come to the United States.^{1,3,4}
- We support granting legal status to all veterans who honorably serve in the armed forces of the U.S.^{4,13}
- We support an independent immigration court should include the recruitment of more highly qualified immigration judges.⁴
- We need to ensure that every asylum seeker has legal assistance, receives “due process,” and is able to present their claim to US Officials.^{1,4}
- Asylum seekers should be detained only when a flight risk or community safety is an issue.^{1,4}
- Asylum seekers should have access to a bond hearing.⁴
- We believe in state oversight over immigration detention centers.⁴
- Any U.S. official who abuses an asylum seeker should be held accountable.^{1,4,11}
- We support the admittance of asylum seekers who are victims of domestic and gang violence on the basis of credible fear.^{1,4}
- We support the adoption of the Dream and Promise Act of 2019.⁴
- We support the protection of people in the United States with Temporary Status, and Deferred enforced Departures status until their status has been properly established.^{1,4}
- We support the elimination of the requirement that undocumented individuals who otherwise qualify for legal status must leave the U.S. before becoming citizens.⁴
- We believe the Customs and Border Protection Agency and ICE should reprioritize their efforts to focus on border related activities such as drug and human trafficking, rather than law enforcement activities in the interior of the United States.^{1,4,11}
- We support ending agreements under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and other such agreements between federal immigration enforcement agencies and state and local entities that erode trust between communities and local police.^{4,11}

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- We support proportional representation at the county level, including increasing the Board of County Commissioners to five elected members.⁵
- We support giving county residents the same right of petition as city and town residents, to ensure the rights of initiative, referendum, and recall.⁵
- We encourage representative redistricting.^{1,5}
- We support expanding automatic voter registration.^{1,5}
- We support public financing for political candidates and campaigns.⁵
- The DCCC/DSCC shall not endorse a candidate before the primary election.⁵
- We support the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.⁵
- All eligible voters should always be encouraged, and voting venues should be easily accessible.^{1,5}
- We support funding disclosures from not only those running for office but also all political parties, corporations, as well as independent expenditures and political action committees.⁵
- We support investigating the idea to establish rank choice voting for elections, vacancy committees and internal party votes.⁵
- We support the abolition of the caucus system and support moving to a primary system
- We need to increase our investments in research and development into industries of the future.^{7,8,9}
- We need to substantially increase investments in renewable energy and environmental protections.^{7,8,9}
- We support rebuilding and maintaining the nation's infrastructure.^{9,10}
- We support trade Agreements and trade partners who live up to their labor and environmental obligations.^{8,9}
- Banking must be regulated to prevent exposing the public to systemic financial risk.⁹
- Industry should be regulated to protect people from direct and indirect harmful effects. Regulations should balance their costs to the public benefits.^{1,6,8,9}
- The purpose of taxes is to raise revenue to fund the government without running up excessive debt while doing the most good for the most people over the long term.⁹
- Tax policy should help reduce both income and opportunity inequalities.^{1,9}
- Tax policy should be used to create incentives or disincentives for the public benefit.⁹
- TABOR prevents the state legislature from changing Colorado's tax policies, so we support its repeal.^{1,2,6,9,10}
- We support preserving the independence of the Federal Reserve.⁹
- Interest rate policy should spur sustainable growth while controlling for inflation.^{9,10}

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- We support programs that mitigate the harm caused to our labor force from globalization and automation with lifelong learning (e.g., job training and transition programs, apprenticeships, career-tech education, and more).^{2,9,10}
- Working people should have a fair day's pay with adequate benefits and a healthy and safe working environment.^{6,9}
- We support equal pay for equal work.^{1,9}
- We support more funding for students in 2 and 4 year colleges and universities.^{2,9}
- We support a federal living minimum wage.⁹
- Workers should be able to assemble and organize and bargain collectively over wages and working conditions without retaliation.⁹
- We support adequate funding for unemployment insurance, food programs, and health care for the non-working. No one should go hungry, suffer from housing insecurity, or be unable to get medical treatment.^{6,9}
- We support a paid family leave insurance program for everyone who needs to take care of a new baby, a sick parent, a sick child, or themselves. We support family leave for birth, death, or caregiving with at least partial pay.^{6,9}
- We oppose the use of child or foreign sweatshop labor as morally reprehensible.^{1,9}
- We believe employees should have a voice on corporation Boards of Directors.⁹
- We support extending and expanding low income housing tax credits.⁹
- We need to understand our water sources through testing and work to clean up, and keep resilient, our water infrastructure.^{8,10}
- Water plans should include multiple years of reserves and should be either on or working toward 100% replenishable sourcing.^{8,10}
- We support joining the Paris Accord.⁸
- We believe that energy sources that have been shown with scientific evidence to be harmful to people or the environment should be discontinued.⁸
- We support paying Medicare providers fair prices for services.^{6,9}
- We oppose any and all attempts to discontinue and/or to privatize Social Security.^{1,6,9}
- We oppose the manipulation of the cost of living adjustment for determining Social Security benefits.^{6,9}
- We support bans on open carry firearms in all public buildings, and an assault weapons ban.^{6,12}
- We support limits on assault weapons, magazines and changing the firing capacity and/or speed of weapons (e.g., bump stocks, etc.).^{6,12}

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- We support tighter regulation on the sale of guns on the internet and at gun shows.^{6,12}
- We support mandatory safety training, licensing for all gun owners, and registration of all firearms.^{2,6,12}
- We support rigorous background checks to include fingerprinting, mental health, and domestic violence as well as criminal history.^{6,12}
- We support laws allowing courts to issue an order to temporarily remove firearms from the homes of persons in crisis and at a demonstrated risk of harming themselves or others, provided there is adequate due process for such persons in crisis.^{1,6,12}
- We believe in providing transition counseling, education, job training, job placement assistance, physical and mental health funding for veterans upon termination of service.^{2,6,13}
- We advocate for full funding and modernization of the Veterans' Administration to allow expediting the processing of veterans' records.^{6,13}
- We support providing for reasonable appointment times for all medical services, mental health services, and emergency services.^{6,13}
- Funding for basic research. We believe that basic research funding must be increased in order to maintain this country's competitive position in the world, facilitate economic and job growth, and improve the quality of life.^{9,14}
- We encourage the development of environmentally friendly technology to replace older energy sources, reduce pollution, and mitigate climate change.^{7,8,14}
- We believe in the democratization of information and that all Internet traffic be handled and prioritized on an equal basis to provide equal and fair access for all Americans.¹⁴
- We support the deployment of rural broadband technology to promote equal and fair internet access for all Americans.¹⁴
- We support the reasonable enforcement of existing antitrust regulations and encourage additional legislation to ensure free markets in emerging new technologies.^{9,14}
- We encourage legislation to extend existing privacy protections to include any information that is linked or linkable to a natural person.
 - DNA. We believe that an individual's DNA should be private and endorse legislation to fully protect individual rights.^{1,6,11,14}
 - Facial Recognition. We believe that an individual's facial profile should be private and endorse legislation to fully protect individual rights.^{1,11,14}

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