



2016 PLATFORM PROCESS TIMELINE & FINAL DRAFT

February 13	Process considered and approved by State Central Committee
February 22	Input process began; drafting started <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>IDP staff conducted meetings and conversations with stakeholders and campaigns to seek input on platform, using 2014 as a draft.</i>• <i>State Committee members began seeking input at district and constituency caucus meetings using our input form and via e-mail.</i>• <i>A notice was put on the IDP website letting the public know where input could be sent by the deadline, and the input form was put on the IDP website for 30 days.</i>• <i>IDP also sent an e-mail blast seeking input during this time period.</i>
April 4	Input process ended; drafting continued
April 4 – May	Drafting continued
June 3	Final draft sent to State Committee prior to adoption
June 10	Final draft sent to printer for Convention program booklet
June 17	Platform consideration & preliminary adoption at State Committee meeting
June 18	Platform is considered and adopted by State Convention

PROPOSED INDIANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY 2016 STATE CONVENTION PLATFORM

In the year of Indiana's Bicentennial, the Indiana Democratic Party has spent time since our last State Convention evaluating our "brand," our values and how we expand our Party. One statement continues to summarize what we, as Democrats, believe: our state can, and must, do better.

Hoosier Democrats must communicate what we are for and what we will do to make Indiana better not just now – but for generations to come. This issues platform reflects the values and input of Hoosiers across Indiana – a discussion that will continue as we work together toward common sense solutions to our state's challenges.

Governor Pence and the Republican supermajorities in the Statehouse continue to push their out-of-touch ideologies instead of focusing on our state's economy, education system, infrastructure, and reversing the standards by which our state is measured. This includes:

Bringing a political agenda to our education system. From declining an \$80 million grant that would have helped establish a statewide Pre-K system to stripping the powers of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Statehouse Republicans have shown Hoosiers that they will put special interests ahead of our tax dollars and the well-being of our students, teachers, and schools.

Putting Indiana's "Hoosier Hospitality" reputation in jeopardy. Against advice from business leaders and public opinion, Republicans pushed through the embarrassing and unnecessary Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), making it legal to openly discriminate against Hoosiers. RFRA threw the state into a \$250 million economic panic, drove away future business opportunities, and damaged our reputation of being a welcoming state for all.

Allowing our "Crossroads of America" to crumble. Indiana currently has a D+-rated infrastructure system. With over 1,700 deficient bridges and the state wasting over \$71 million in faulty asphalt, our roads and bridges continue to crumble before our eyes. Republicans brought forth short-term solutions, but Democrats know we must invest in our infrastructure long-term or our state will further see economic damage.

Through all of this, Indiana Democrats stood on the right side of Indiana's most important issues and worked to be problem-solvers determined to restore trust in and make government work for Hoosiers, not against them.

BUILDING AN ECONOMY FOR ALL

The Hoosier economy can no longer be just a talking point in the current administration's political playbook. Those serious about truly changing Indiana for the better must understand the important balance needed to take our state's current reality to a vision upon which high-wage, high-skill jobs; a prosperous middle class, access to education and a great quality of life in our communities can be found.

The Indiana Democratic Party is committed to ensuring families do not just make ends meet, but are able to thrive and make strong contributions to the Hoosier economy. Unemployment rates don't tell the full tale of the Hoosier economy because not all jobs are created equal. Each requires its own unique set of skills that can only happen through targeted and ongoing investment in education, training and a balanced tax environment. What's more, our economic approach must be one with a long-term goal in mind of attracting and retaining the very best the American workforce has to offer.

To restore this vision for the Indiana economy, the Indiana Democratic Party will continue the fight to:

- Work to raise wages in our state, including the minimum wage. Currently, Hoosier workers make 86 cents to every one American dollar earned. Our income strength is 38th in the nation. Hoosiers must earn a livable wage if they are to care for the health and wellness of their families.
- Work to attract and retain high-wage, high-skill jobs of the future in Indiana by:
 - Keeping our state's best and brightest in Indiana by creating tax incentives for those graduating with degrees in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).
 - Investing in manufacturing to help small businesses purchase equipment and hire new workers through ideas such as Manufacturing Reinvestment Accounts.
 - Promoting updated training and education that prepares Hoosiers for a changing economy through 21st Century college and career-ready institutions, both post-secondary and lifelong.
 - Promoting economic innovation through sustained investment in research and development, rather than painful funding cuts that can lead to delays in product development in the competitive marketplace.
- Support small business in our state – especially those engaged in technological innovations that support infrastructure and industry.

- Incentivize employers to hire unemployed and underemployed Hoosiers.
- Encourage an extensive evaluation of tax incentives, as well as the establishment of rigorous job creation and accountability standards for economic development tools offered by the state. These tools can spur economic growth when used effectively. Unfortunately, over the last decade there have been too many stories about never-materialized job projects that received taxpayer-funded incentives. With the recent Carrier news, employers must be held accountable if they choose to send jobs overseas instead of employing Hoosiers.
- Tap all of Indiana's energy resources -- coal, natural gas, oil, wind, solar, ethanol, bio-diesel -- to increase our energy independence, while respecting and protecting our environment.

All Hoosiers deserve the opportunity to reach their highest potential in our state. The pathway to greater income, success, and personal achievement is through education and training that fits each individual and industry's workforce needs. With a globalized economy, it's essential that Hoosier workers possess transferable skills that they may use in their current and future jobs.

As a state, we must:

- Connect Hoosier businesses with our state's community college network in order to ensure that curricula produce a competitive workforce in each region of the state.
- Target existing workforce training dollars to the programs that teach the skills employers need now. This straightforward approach makes better use of existing programs by prioritizing the types of training programs that will lead to a job upon completion.
- Focus high-wage, high-growth economic development efforts in communities with high unemployment. While our overall unemployment rate has dropped, our workforce has either given up their job search or earn wages lower than the national average. Hoosiers need confidence and security that they, too, can recover economically.

PROTECTING INDIANA JOBS AND WORKERS

Organized labor has led the charge for fair wages and benefits as well as workplace safety for more than a century. This effort has led to the creation of millions of good jobs, a strengthening of the middle class through longstanding relationships with responsible employers, and a focus on getting the job done. As a result, EVERY American worker has reaped the benefits afforded by the long struggle of those in organized labor.

The Indiana Democratic Party supports the efforts of our partners in labor to remain a critical piece of the fabric of the American marketplace and will continue to oppose efforts to diminish that presence. The so-called “right to work” law and the repeal of the common construction wage were steps in an effort to destroy the organized labor movement and undermine the workplace. We believe “right to work” should be repealed and the common construction wage law should be restored. We will continue to oppose any efforts that wouldn’t protect labor agreements or any measures that could endanger workers on the job. We support the passage and enforcement of state and federal laws ensuring workers the right to bargain collectively, including those who work in the public sector. We encourage strong penalties for violating labor laws, and support banning permanent replacements of workers who strike responsibly.

Trade agreements must also benefit Hoosier workers. The Indiana Democratic Party supports the strong enforcement of fair trade laws already in place, and will fight to ensure that any new trade agreements include strong standards on labor, the environment, and currency manipulation.

We must:

- Crack down on unfair practices that lead to a loss of Hoosier jobs. Indiana manufacturers face unfair competition and we need to level the playing field.
- Close tax loopholes that encourage some corporations to ship American jobs overseas. It is unacceptable that our tax code currently offers incentives for sending Hoosier jobs to other countries.
- Oppose unfair trade deals that could ship American jobs overseas, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). We need fair trade, not agreements that have the potential to put American companies at a disadvantage and Hoosiers out of work.

We will work to restore workers’ rights to overtime, fight the repeal of dues deduction laws, work to restore and enhance prevailing wage protections, stop companies from mislabeling employees as “independent contractors” to avoid paying benefits and taxes and prevent wage discrimination of any kind and empower the Indiana Civil Rights Commission to guarantee compliance.

We must also ensure an adequate system of unemployment insurance, so that it can be operated as the sound safety net for which it is intended. We support enhanced protections for whistleblowers reporting injuries or unsafe conditions to ensure that problems are reported and resolved, and we believe that worker’s compensation must be reformed to ensure workers injured on the job receive the care and support needed to return to the workforce.

STANDING WITH HOOSIER WOMEN

Women make up just more than half of Indiana's population. The protection of the rights gained when Indiana became the 35th state to pass the ERA in 1977, is at risk. Many men and women lobbied tirelessly for seven long years to achieve these rights by changing nearly 300 laws that were deemed discriminatory towards Hoosier women.

Many of our Indiana legislators have taken it upon themselves to erode the rights of women, particularly in regards to access to health care and decisions between women and their doctors.

In order to fully stand with Hoosier women, they must be supported economically as well. It bears repeating, then, that in our state, women only make 75 cents on the dollar compared to their male counterparts. Women lose substantial benefits and retirement income over their lifetime as a result. The wage gap not only affects women's direct wages, but the entire family suffers. Women hold two-thirds of low-wage jobs, with Indiana being among the states with the largest wage gap in the nation. The Indiana Democratic Party supports equal pay for equal work, and supports efforts to realize paid family leave.

We will:

- Stand with Hoosier Women against legislation that further erodes any rights that have been gained and continue efforts for more protection under the law towards equality.
- Continue the fight for equal pay for equal work and dispel myths associated with our counterparts' reasons for opposing it, as well as support efforts toward making paid family leave a reality.
- Support education on women's rights and also work with our women's organizations that support these efforts.
- Promote the health and safety of women and their families, including access to vital health services and care to obtain preventive and family planning services.
- Work to stop harmful legislation, such as 2016's HEA 1337, which puts women and Hoosier families at risk by endangering the doctor-patient relationship.
- Support efforts to reduce Indiana's high infant mortality rate, including the fight to afford ALL Hoosier women access to affordable and ongoing medical care.
- Protect survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking through legislation.

SUPPORTING OUR TEACHERS, BUILDING STRONG SCHOOLS

The Indiana Democratic Party believes the backbone of our great state is the strength of our public school system. We believe strong public schools ensure that Indiana remains an attractive place to live, work, and raise a family.

As Democrats, we believe in respecting the local control of schools, and we are opposed to the privatization of our public school system. Private ventures continue to siphon off taxpayer dollars that might otherwise be used as improvement dollars, which hinders educators' resources and negatively impacts the educational experience of the student.

Indiana Democrats refuse to believe there's such a thing as a "standardized" child. Our public schools are not factories designed to produce a product – they are great democratic institutions designed to provide equal opportunities to students who become productive citizens. Every Hoosier student is unique, and we should encourage our teachers to teach to our students, not to a high-stakes test. We must move the power from the Statehouse back to the schoolhouse and give local school districts more local control.

Under Democratic leadership over the past four years, we have already made progress. Nearly 100,000 Hoosier students are attending better schools. We have achieved this in spite of Republican efforts to strip our elected Superintendent of power. Together, we will achieve even more in the next four years. We will work to:

- Secure fair and adequate funding for public schools to ensure access to a balanced curriculum for all students and to ensure access to effective and highly effective teachers regardless of their ZIP code.
- Provide access to universal preschool across the state, including the expansion of preschool programs in all public school districts to ensure every student has a fair start in school by age 5.
- Abolish ISTEP and all other high-stakes tests and replace them with a streamlined, individualized assessment that provides quick feedback to students, families, and educators that shows performance and growth over the course of a school year.
- Individualize high school graduation plans and expand access to college and career ready pathways. Ensure all students have a clear pathway to graduation that supports their ability to enter college and a career.
- Foster an environment of trust that embraces great teachers and encourages the best and brightest to enter the teaching profession by promoting the proposals of Superintendent Ritz's *Blue Ribbon Commission*.
- Engage families to increase the literacy rates of Hoosier children by embracing tried-and-true best practices such as Superintendent Ritz's *Hoosier Family of Readers* initiative.

- Continue to provide direct service to public schools by expanding efforts like Superintendent Ritz's *Division of Outreach for School Improvement* that provides grass-roots support to public schools.
- Ensure our schools continue to be safe for all Hoosier children.
- Continue to protect the privacy of student data from those who would profit from it.
- Close the digital divide to ensure all students have equal access to technology and resources at school and at home.
- Promote a positive learning climate for all students to stop the tide of bullying so all students feel included regardless of their race, color, religion, creed, national origin, economic status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- Promote the affordability of higher education for all Hoosiers by ensuring that tuition, textbooks, and other materials remain as low as possible and increase participation in the Democrat-designed *Evan Bayh 21st Century Scholars* program.
- Offer in-state tuition rates to DREAMers who graduated from Indiana high schools and received DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) status from the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service.

Hoosier families and communities are strong and prosperous because Indiana Democrats work to reinforce the interdependence between education and economic prosperity. We believe that strong education policy—when linked with intentional economic strategies—will lead to a thriving Hoosier economy that works for all of us.

When Hoosier students are strong, Hoosier families are stronger. The Indiana Democratic Party will maintain our commitment to keep up the fight for our state's future.

SUPPORTING STRONG HOOSIER COMMUNITIES

Our communities are what truly make Indiana home. The experiences a family has in their city or town can mean the difference between staying in Indiana or moving elsewhere for a different quality of life. In recent years, the current administration has not only put in jeopardy the welcoming and hospitable reputation of our state, but also the urban and rural communities that have built the very definition of "Hoosier Hospitality."

The state administration has advocated for tax policies that not only continue squeezing services Hoosiers need and deserve, but also policies that pit one county against another, all guised in the spirit of competition. In reality, the out-of-touch administration and legislative supermajorities are simply pushing their own political and ideological ambitions.

The Indiana Democratic Party believes that without giving communities any real or practical tools to assist them in continuing to provide essential services, the erosion of trust in good government will continue. This trend should be reversed, and we support legislation that would provide more flexibility to local government.

SUPPORTING SAFE HOOSIER COMMUNITIES

Public safety is vital to thriving, happy communities and providing our children the future they deserve. Currently, under-supported, overstretched law enforcement agencies both at the state and local level are struggling to meet the challenges faced by violent crime, illegal drugs and an epidemic of prescription drug abuse that is tearing at the fabric of too many Hoosier communities. As Democrats, we recognize that the roots and consequences of crime spread far and wide, from the intensely personal experiences of victims and communities to the society-wide economic implications of crime. Tackling crime in a way that tears it out at its roots requires leadership. We support:

- Working with the legislature to ensure that local law enforcement agencies have the resources and tools available to them to keep Hoosiers safe.
- Creating a true partnership with Indiana State Police. Public safety is paramount in any state and having a substantive and productive relationship between the state's chief law enforcement agency and its governor is essential. We must also ensure that ISP can effectively.
- Attacking Indiana's opioid epidemic by mustering state and local agencies to track, investigate and prosecute pill mills and dealers, and prevent and treat addiction.
- Expand on recent criminal code reforms to explore ways in which penalties can be more fairly assessed.
- Study the use of medical marijuana and the penalties for its possession.

SECURING OUR POSITION AS THE 'CROSSROADS OF AMERICA'

Indiana is currently faced with an aging infrastructure that's better suited for the 20th Century. With more than 1,700 deficient bridges and the state wasting millions in faulty asphalt, we lack a true foundation for faster and more efficient modes of transport, and local communities struggle to maintain what they have - let alone the capacity to improve or expand.

As the "Crossroads of America," Indiana is a network of great cities, towns, counties and landscapes that must be able to utilize transportation assets to move toward the future and rebuild our state's economy through a strong infrastructure system that will attract and retain good jobs.

The Indiana Democratic Party supports making numerous investments in Indiana's infrastructure through the strategic use of federal and state dollars. Construction of highways and bridges must be adequately financed with a combination of resources to ensure that all citizens pay a fair share of the burden. We support developing and expanding public mass transit initiatives, including the construction of light rail, especially for high-density population centers with disproportionately low-income residents. In addition, we must:

- Ensure that infrastructure plans are both comprehensive and attentive to state and local infrastructure needs.
- Ensure Hoosier taxpayers receive a fair share of federal transportation funding. Indiana currently receives 91% of its share of Highway Trust Fund contributions. We need to increase the rate of return on our tax dollars by leveraging federal funds so the State of Indiana and local governments have the infrastructure to support and attract businesses to Indiana.
- Ensure that our infrastructure portfolio includes ongoing and adequate funding from the General Assembly with road and bridge projects, improved rail service, multi-modal port development, public transportation and access to broadband and modern information technology across our state.
- Become a leader in farmland preservation, air quality improvement, and economic growth.
- Achieve our long-term infrastructure investment goals with an eye on Indiana's future, environmental sustainability and the prosperity of our state for generations to come. We cannot allow our long-term future to be brokered with the promise of foreign investment deals that may only lead to a breakdown in the infrastructure that makes us the Crossroads of America. Citizens and workers across our state need certainty that our system of infrastructure will get them not just to work – but also help them drive into the future.

PROMOTING A HEALTHY INDIANA

The Indiana Democratic Party is committed to ensuring Hoosier families – both urban and rural populations - have access to quality, affordable health care that includes preventive services and does not exclude citizens based on a pre-existing condition or inability to pay.

With the implementation of the 2010 Affordable Care Act, which grants every American the right to coverage, Hoosiers are receiving health care now more than ever before. Whether it's the Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0, the Children's Health Insurance Plan, or the private exchange program, the Affordable Care Act gives Hoosiers more opportunities to have the quality health care they deserve.

As Democrats, we support expanding the necessary programs and investing in the infrastructure required to give Hoosiers the health care they need. We recognize that the 2010 law is not perfect and much work remains to achieve its long-term intent of reducing health care costs. However, we will continue our push for improvements that strengthen the law, without leaving behind our state's most vulnerable who need coverage. We will continue to push for common sense health care solutions that work to achieve true and substantive health outcomes for Hoosiers, rather than simply serve political ones.

INCLUDING EVERY HOOSIER – PERIOD.

The Indiana Democratic Party is proud of our longstanding commitment to and support for civil rights and equality. As the party of inclusion, we strongly oppose the restriction of opportunities to Hoosiers based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, economic background or as a person with a disability.

We reaffirm our commitment to fully embrace Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, as well as full enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 for Hoosiers with disabilities and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

As Democrats, we believe that older workers are a vital part of the workforce and that prohibitions against age discrimination should be enforceable in the same manner and to the same extent as any other discrimination. We also continue to support legislation that would protect the freedom of all Hoosiers and create tougher penalties for those who infringe, criminally or otherwise, on those freedoms.

We are concerned with accessibility issues for those with disabilities, including personal income limits and attaining and sustaining personal care when needed. We also believe that a state Family and Medical Leave Act should be ratified and that meaningful remedies be available when a person is subjected to discrimination and seeks redress under our state civil rights statute. Further, Hoosiers should not be bound by their disabilities – therefore, Democrats will advocate for a better environment for entrepreneurship and small business opportunities for Hoosiers with disabilities.

We believe those who wish to make a life for themselves and their families in Indiana should be afforded the opportunity to do so. Furthermore, it is unconscionable for any man, woman, or child to be exploited or abused. As Democrats, we firmly believe everyone deserves to be treated with basic human decency and should be allowed to pursue the American dream. We firmly oppose the practice of racial profiling as a law

enforcement tool. Police stops or arrests should be based on evidence of criminal conduct, not on a person's demographic or physical characteristics.

In an effort to continue to restore trust in government, the Indiana Democratic Party supports the right of every Hoosier citizen of legal voting age to register to vote and cast a ballot without undue burden, fear or intimidation. We vehemently oppose any politically motivated effort aimed at disenfranchising any voter of our state, including efforts to make it difficult for voters to obtain identification or access to polling locations. Voting is our most fundamental right, one that preserves all other rights and that ensures the legitimacy of our political system. To that end, we support the opportunity to vote by mail be afforded to all Hoosier voters, and Indiana Democrats are supportive of redistricting reform to maximize voter participation. We also advocate for changes in institutions such as redistricting and reforms to campaign finance laws that disrupt the ability for all Hoosiers to participate in the political process.

We believe that state and local governments, as well as the private sector, should create a truly diverse and inclusive economic infrastructure by making it a priority to buy goods and services from minority contractors.

In the most recent sessions of the Indiana General Assembly, attempts were made to divert Hoosiers' attention away from the economic challenges facing our state by passing the unnecessary Religious Freedom Restoration Act in Indiana. Too much time was spent focused on divisive social issues that send an unwelcoming message to those around us. In fact, this hurts job creation and enshrines discrimination in our state's Constitution.

To that end, the Indiana Democratic Party opposes all forms of discrimination based upon sexual orientation or gender identity. We support full equality for LGBT Hoosiers. As Democrats, we oppose discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodation and we strongly support the adoption of inclusive LGBT civil rights legislation now. Democrats are working to ensure that every Hoosier gets a fair shot to achieve the American dream. For the sake of current and future generations, we feel it is our duty to put an end to any injustices that threaten that goal. In the Indiana Democratic Party, everyone has and always will have a seat at the table.

SECURING THE FUTURE OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE HOOSIERS

The Indiana Democratic Party has a long and proud tradition of enhancing the quality of life for all Hoosiers.

We know that children live better lives when their families are strong. We also know that families are stronger when they reside in communities that connect them to

economic opportunities, social networks, and services. These "connections" include employment, health care, education, adequate nutrition, housing, technology and safe childcare.

We are committed to ensuring the economic stability of all Indiana families by minimizing barriers to employment. Transportation, childcare, education, discrimination, and eldercare are all potential obstacles that can prevent individuals from fully participating in the workforce. The Indiana Democratic Party supports policies that will assist Hoosier workers with these issues and provide opportunities to succeed.

We are committed to maintaining Medicare and Social Security, which are essential to protecting the health and financial security of America's seniors. Both programs must be preserved and strengthened for future generations. We oppose attempts to privatize Social Security or turn Medicare into a voucher program.

We have a moral obligation to take care of our nation's seniors, and after a lifetime of paying into these programs, we have a responsibility to ensure that both Medicare and Social Security are preserved for current and future retirees. We must ensure the state programs designed to help protect and support our Hoosier seniors are adequately funded and reach their full potential.

The Indiana Democratic Party believes that vulnerable Hoosiers, including senior citizens and low-income families, must not be preyed upon by those who would take advantage of them through risky mortgages, loans or identity and investment schemes. Hoosier families must be free from the fear of losing money to predatory lenders or dubious commercial enterprises. We should also recognize the importance of consumer protection by supporting efforts to bolster cyber-security and fraud reduction. In addition, we must ensure the Office of Attorney General is protecting Hoosiers by not spending tax dollars on frivolous lawsuits that only seek to advance ideology instead of the well-being of our state.

As the Party that advocates for all Hoosiers, we support prevention and education programs that teach age-appropriate sex education. These programs should focus on medically accurate information for Hoosiers to protect themselves and others, and should also include abstinence. We fully support adequate funding for substance abuse treatment and prevention services, including programs for prenatal substance abuse prevention. Indiana must adequately address the needs of people with HIV/AIDS, while at the same time provide education and prevention services to reduce the number

of new infections following the current administration's delayed response to the outbreak in Southern Indiana.

Family violence is an increasing concern in Indiana because of the high incidence of child mistreatment and continuing incidents of child fatalities. In order to protect some of our most vulnerable Hoosiers, the Indiana Democratic Party supports continued reform of Indiana's child welfare programs, including enhanced services, adequate funding, and improved training of caseworkers.

PROMOTING ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

The Indiana Democratic Party believes in a strong, balanced approach to energy production and environmental protection. We believe a responsible and comprehensive energy policy should promote domestic production and national security, while providing affordable energy to Hoosier families and businesses. That will require taking advantage of all our energy resources from coal, natural gas, and oil to renewable energy sources like wind and solar, ethanol, and bio-diesel. Hoosiers have a tremendous opportunity to contribute to the evolving energy economy through the production of renewable and alternative energy sources that create jobs and compete economically with conventional sources of power.

We also recognize Hoosier communities and our economy are built on the foundation of our natural resources—from Lake Michigan and the Hoosier National Forest to our rivers and streams and fertile farm land. As Hoosiers continue to innovate, we should do so by protecting the air we breathe and the water we drink for future generations.

The Indiana Democratic Party believes that we must:

- Modernize and re-tool our state's economy to replace the manufacturing jobs that have vanished from Indiana. We must utilize the skills of our workforce to attract “green” manufacturing and invest in renewable energies, both of which will sustain the environment and provide high-skilled, high-paying jobs.
- Identify and reduce Indiana's carbon footprint.
- Protect our state forests from unnecessary lumber harvesting and regularly audit our state's natural resources for long-term environmental sustainability.
- Promote energy efficiency programming across the state, by restoring programs like the state's Energize Indiana program.
- Decrease our dependence on foreign oil, which poses a serious threat to our economy and our national security. Continually fluctuating gas prices create economic insecurity and force Hoosier families to make difficult sacrifices.
- Support measures that will ensure and protect our supply of clean water, and encourage comprehensive water consumption and ground water protection plans.

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HONORING OUR VETERANS

The Indiana Democratic Party honors those who serve in our United States military, as well as the Indiana National Guard and Air National Guard. The dedication of an individual in this endeavor is the ultimate selfless act to perform on behalf of one's state and country. We continue to applaud the sacrifices of these individuals and their families to serve our nation and to defend and protect the principles of democracy, principles we as a party hold in the highest regard. It is our steadfast belief that we must continue to be committed to giving our brave men and women the tools to succeed in whatever endeavor our nation faces either at home or abroad.

Our party is committed to providing our aging and newly returned veterans the benefits they deserve and more importantly, have earned. Our duty to those who serve our nation does not end when they leave that service: we must guarantee that our veterans have access to the health benefits, education and job opportunities we promised to them.

This includes championing legislation that:

- Gives veterans assistance in the job market and makes it easier for business to hire those who serve our country.
- Addresses the needs of and manages services for women veterans and military families.
- Removes restrictive timeframes to give military families as much access to needed assistance as possible.
- Continues focus on the growing problem of PTSD, traumatic brain injury and prevention of military suicides. It is imperative that we respect, care and prepare for new sets of challenges met by our veterans so that they may come home to Indiana and be successful.

RESTORING TRUST AND BALANCE IN GOOD GOVERNMENT

In today's hyper-political environment, the premise behind "good government" can easily be lost. Trust in government is endangered, and the Indiana Democratic Party must be in a position to convey a positive message to Hoosiers that we believe that government can affect positive change in the lives of Hoosiers, and that our Party is the one to lead this effort into the future in a responsible, efficient way. It is our belief that those who convey the message that "government is the enemy" have little faith in the

electorate to make decisions important to our future. Every day, there are problems to solve, and Indiana needs serious problem solvers at the helm of government.

The Indiana Democratic Party is working to restore that trust in good government by sharing an aggressive, results-based vision for how Indiana government can do much, much better.

Through maintaining our brand of fiscal responsibility, common sense, and inclusion, we can have a renewed focus on building opportunities for our state's middle class, for education and infrastructure, and for staying squarely focused on issues that lift up every Hoosier and lead to job creation and sustainable wages - rather than a fear-based ideology that tells others that our state's welcome mat is only out for a chosen few.

Hoosiers deserve leadership that will take into account the full impact of fiscal decisions instead of elected officials who chase headlines in order to improve their political standing.

The Indiana Democratic Party believes ethical governance is rooted in honesty, accountability, and transparency. We believe that high ethical standards must be restored and put in place at every level in state government. Values based upon the highest principles must be commonplace in the Governor's Office and all state agencies and elected offices.

Government ethics should be applied and enforced with an objective standard, and investigations should be conducted independently, thoroughly, and publicly to make certain that violators are handled accordingly and all questions raised are answered.

As the party of the future that will lead our state into the next generation, the Indiana Democratic Party is proud to submit this platform for consideration at the 2016 State Democratic Convention.

We can do better for Indiana, and Democrats will get that job done.