



This platform is dedicated with appreciation and reverence for:

The wisdom of the Framers
of the United States Constitution,
who gave us a Republic,
as Benjamin Franklin cautioned,
if we can keep it.



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Preamble



The 2012 Republican Platform is a statement of who we are and what we believe as a Party and our vision for a stronger and freer America.

The pursuit of opportunity has defined America from our very beginning. This is a land of opportunity. The American Dream is a dream of equal opportunity for all. And the Republican Party is the party of opportunity.

Today, that American Dream is at risk.

Our nation faces unprecedented uncertainty with great fiscal and economic challenges, and under the current Administration has suffered through the longest and most severe economic downturn since the Great Depression.

Many Americans have experienced the burden of lost jobs, lost homes, and lost hopes. Our middle class has felt that burden most acutely. Meanwhile, the federal government has expanded its size and scope, its borrowing and spending, its debt and deficit. Federalism is threatened and liberty retreats.

For the world, this has been four years of lost American leadership, leadership that depends upon economic vitality and peace through strength.

Put simply: The times call for trustworthy leadership and honest talk about the challenges we face. Our nation and our people cannot afford the status quo. We must begin anew, with profound changes in the way government operates; the way it budgets, taxes, and regulates. Jefferson's vision of a "wise and frugal government" must be restored.

Providence has put us at the fork in the road, and we must answer the question: If not us, who? If not now, when?

That is the choice facing the American people this November. Every voter will be asked to choose between the chronic high unemployment and the

unsustainable debt produced by a big government entitlement society, or a positive, optimistic view of an opportunity society, where any American who works hard, dreams big and follows the rules can achieve anything he or she wants.

The American people possess vast reserves of courage and determination and the capacity to hear the truth and chart a strong course. They are eager for the opportunity to take on life's challenges and, through faith and hard work, transform the future for the better. They are the most generous people on earth, giving sacrificially of their time, talent, and treasure.

This platform affirms that America has always been a place of grand dreams and even grander realities; and so it will be again, if we return government to its proper role, making it smaller and smarter. If we restructure government's most important domestic programs to avoid their fiscal collapse. If we keep taxation, litigation, and regulation to a minimum. If we celebrate success, entrepreneurship, and innovation. If we lift up the middle class. If we hand over to the next generation a legacy of growth and prosperity, rather than entitlements and indebtedness.

That same commitment must be present both here at home and abroad. We are a party that knows the difference between international acclaim and world leadership. We will lift the torch of freedom and democracy to inspire all those who would be free. As President Reagan issued the clarion call to "tear down this Wall," so must we always stand against tyranny and oppression. We will always support and cherish our men and women in uniform who defend our liberties with their lives.

As we embark upon this critical mission, we are

not without guidance. We possess an owner's manual: the Constitution of the United States, the greatest political document ever written. That sacred document shows us the path forward. Trust the people. Limit government. Respect federalism. Guarantee opportunity, not outcomes. Adhere to the rule of law. Reaffirm that our rights come from God, are protected by government, and that the only just government is one that truly governs with the consent of the governed.

The principles written in the Constitution are secured by the character of the American people. President George Washington said in his first inaugural address: "The propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself

has ordained." Values matter. Character counts.

Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan understand these great truths. They share a positive vision for America – a vision of America renewed and strong. They know America's best days lay ahead. It will take honest results-oriented, conservative leadership to enact good policies for our people. They will provide it.

We respectfully submit this platform to the American people. It is both a vision of where we are headed and an invitation to join us in that journey. It is about the great dreams and opportunities that have always been America and must remain the essence of America for generations to come.

May God continue to shed his grace on the United States of America.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert F. McDonnell".

Governor Bob McDonnell
Chairman



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Hoeven".

Senator John Hoeven
Co-Chair



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marsha Blackburn".

Congressman Marsha Blackburn
Co-Chair

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American Exceptionalism

Restoring the American Dream: Rebuilding the Economy and Creating Jobs



We are the party of maximum economic freedom and the prosperity freedom makes possible. Prosperity is the product of self-discipline, work, savings, and investment by individual Americans, but it is not an end in itself. Prosperity provides the means by which individuals and families can maintain their independence from government, raise their children by their own values, practice their faith, and build communities of self-reliant neighbors. It is also the means by which the United States is able to assert global leadership. The vigor of our economy makes possible our military strength and is critical to our national security.

This year's election is a chance to restore the proven values of the American free enterprise system. We offer our Republican vision of a free people using their God-given talents, combined with hard work, self-reliance, ethical conduct, and the pursuit of opportunity, to achieve great things for themselves and the greater community. Our vision of an opportunity society stands in stark contrast to the current Administration's policies that expand entitlements and guarantees, create new public programs, and provide expensive government bailouts. That road has created a culture of dependency, bloated government, and massive debt.

Republicans believe in the Great American Dream, with its economics of inclusion, enabling everyone to have a chance to own, invest, build, and prosper. It is the opposite of the policies which, for the last three and a half years, have stifled growth, destroyed jobs, halted investment, created unprecedented uncertainty, and prolonged the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. Those policies have placed the federal government in the driver's seat, rather than relying on energetic and entrepreneurial Americans to rebuild the economy from the ground up. Excessive taxation and regulation impede economic development. Lowering taxes pro-

motes substantial economic growth and reducing regulation encourages business formation and job creation. Knowing that, a Republican President and Congress will jumpstart an economic renewal that creates opportunity, rewards work and saving, and unleashes the productive genius of the American people. Because the GOP is the Great Opportunity Party, this is our pledge to workers without jobs, families without savings, and neighborhoods without hope: together we can get our country back on track, expanding its bounty, renewing its faith, and fulfilling its promise of a better life.

Job Creation: Getting Americans Back to Work

The best jobs program is economic growth. We do not offer yet another made-in-Washington package of subsidies and spending to create temporary or artificial jobs. We want much more than that. We want a roaring job market to match a roaring economy. Instead, what this Administration has given us is 42 consecutive months of unemployment above 8 percent, the longest period of high unemployment since the Great Depression. Republicans will pursue free market policies that are the surest way to boost employment and create job growth and economic prosperity for all.

In all the sections that follow, as well as elsewhere in this platform, we explain what must be done to achieve that goal. The tax system must be simplified. Government spending and regulation must be reined in. American companies must be more competitive in the world market, and we must be aggressive in promoting U.S. products abroad and securing open markets for them. A federal-State-private partnership must invest in the nation's infrastructure: roads, bridges, airports, ports, and water systems, among others. Federal training programs have to be overhauled and made relevant for the workplace of

the twenty-first century. Potential employers need certainty and predictability for their hiring decisions, and the team of a Republican President and Congress will create the confidence that will get Americans back to work.

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

America's small businesses are the backbone of the U.S. economy, employing tens of millions of workers. Small businesses create the vast majority of jobs, patents, and U.S. exporters. Under the current Administration, we have the lowest rate of business startups in thirty years. Small businesses are the leaders in the world's advances in technology and innovation, and we pledge to strengthen that role and foster small business entrepreneurship.

While small businesses have significantly contributed to the nation's economic growth, our government has failed to meet its small business goals year after year and failed to overcome burdensome regulatory, contracting, and capital barriers. This impedes their growth.

We will reform the tax code to allow businesses to generate enough capital to grow and create jobs for our families, friends and neighbors all across America. We will encourage investments in small businesses. We will create an environment where adequate financing and credit are available to spur manufacturing and expansion. We will serve as aggressive advocates for small businesses.

Tax Relief to Grow the Economy and Create Jobs

Taxes, by their very nature, reduce a citizen's freedom. Their proper role in a free society should be to fund services that are essential and authorized by the Constitution, such as national security, and the care of those who cannot care for themselves. We reject the use of taxation to redistribute income, fund unnecessary or ineffective programs, or foster the crony capitalism that corrupts both politicians and corporations.

Our goal is a tax system that is simple, transparent, flatter, and fair. In contrast, the current IRS code is like a patchwork quilt, stitched together over time from mismatched pieces, and is beyond the compre-

hension of the average citizen. A reformed code should promote simplicity and coherence, savings and innovation, increase American competitiveness, and recognize the burdens on families with children. To that end, we propose to:

- Extend the 2001 and 2003 tax relief packages—commonly known as the Bush tax cuts—pending reform of the tax code, to keep tax rates from rising on income, interest, dividends, and capital gains;

- Reform the tax code by reducing marginal tax rates by 20 percent across-the-board in a revenue-neutral manner;

- Eliminate the taxes on interest, dividends, and capital gains altogether for lower and middle-income taxpayers;

- End the Death Tax; and

- Repeal the Alternative Minimum Tax.

American Competitiveness in a Global Economy

American businesses now face the world's highest corporate tax rate. It reduces their worldwide competitiveness, encourages corporations to move overseas, lessens investment, cripples job creation, lowers U.S. wages, and fosters the avoidance of tax liability—without actually increasing tax revenues. To level the international playing field, and to spur job creation here at home, we call for a reduction of the corporate rate to keep U.S. corporations competitive internationally, with a permanent research and development tax credit, and a repeal of the corporate alternative minimum tax. We also support the recommendation of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, as well as the current President's Export Council, to switch to a territorial system of corporate taxation, so that profits earned and taxed abroad may be repatriated for job-creating investment here at home without additional penalty.

Fundamental Tax Principles

We oppose retroactive taxation; and we condemn attempts by activist judges, at any level of government, to seize the power of the purse by ordering higher taxes. We oppose tax policies that divide Americans or promote class warfare.

Because of the vital role of religious organiza-

tions, charities, and fraternal benevolent societies in fostering benevolence and patriotism, they should not be subject to taxation, and donations to them should continue to be tax deductible.

In any restructuring of federal taxation, to guard against hypertaxation of the American people, any value added tax or national sales tax must be tied to the simultaneous repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment, which established the federal income tax.

Reining in Out-of-Control Spending, Balancing the Budget, and Ensuring Sound Monetary Policy

The massive federal government is structurally and financially broken. For decades it has been pushed beyond its core functions, increasing spending to unsustainable levels. Elected officials have overpromised and overspent, and now the bills are due. Unless we take dramatic action now, young Americans and their children will inherit an unprecedented legacy of enormous and unsustainable debt, with the interest alone consuming an ever-increasing portion of the country's wealth. The specter of national bankruptcy that now hangs over much of Europe is a warning to us as well. Over the last three and a half years, while cutting the defense budget, the current Administration has added an additional \$5.3 trillion to the national debt—now approximately \$16 trillion, the largest amount in U.S. history. In fiscal year 2011, spending reached \$3.6 trillion, nearly a quarter of our gross domestic product. Adjusted for inflation, that's more than three times its peak level in World War II, and almost half of every dollar spent was borrowed money. Three programs—Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security—account for over 40 percent of total spending. While these levels of spending and debt are already harming job creation and growth, projections of future spending growth are nothing short of catastrophic, both economically and socially. And those dire projections do not include the fiscal nightmare

of Obamacare, with over \$1 trillion in new taxes, multiple mandates, and a crushing price tag.

We can preempt the debt explosion. Backed by a Republican Senate and House, our next President will propose immediate reductions in federal spending, as a down payment on the much larger task of long-range fiscal control. We suggest a tripartite test for every federal activity. First, is it within the constitutional scope of the federal government? Second, is it effective and absolutely necessary? And third, is it sufficiently important to justify borrowing, especially foreign borrowing, to fund it? Against those standards we will measure programs from international population control to California's federally subsidized high-speed train to nowhere, and terminate programs that don't measure up.

Balancing the Budget

Cutting spending is not enough; it must be accompanied by major structural reforms, increased productivity, use of technology, and long-term government downsizing that both reduce debt and deficits and ignite economic growth. We must restructure the twentieth century entitlement state so the missions of important programs can succeed in the twenty-first century. Medicare, in particular, is the largest driver of future debt. Our reform of healthcare will empower millions of seniors to control their personal healthcare decisions, unlike Obamacare that empowered a handful of bureaucrats to cut Medicare in ways that will deny care for the elderly.

We must also change the budget process itself. From its beginning, its design has enabled, rather than restrained, reckless spending by giving procedural cover to Members of Congress. The budget process gave us the insidious term "tax expenditure," which means that any earnings the government allows a taxpayer to keep through a deduction, exemption, or credit are equivalent to spending the same amount on some program. It also lumped a broad range of diverse programs under the

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heading of “entitlement,” as if veterans’ benefits and welfare checks belong in the same category. Far worse, the process assumes every spending program will be permanent and every tax cut will be temporary. It refuses to recognize the beneficial budgetary impact of lower tax rates, and it calls a spending increase a cut if it is less than the rate of inflation.

Republican Members of Congress have repeatedly tried to reform the budget process to make it more transparent and accountable, in particular by voting for a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution, following the lead of 33 States which have put that restraint into their own constitutions. We call for a Constitutional amendment requiring a super-majority for any tax increase, with exceptions for only war and national emergencies, and imposing a cap limiting spending to the historical average percentage of GDP so that future Congresses cannot balance the budget by raising taxes.

Inflation and the Federal Reserve

A sound monetary policy is critical for maintaining a strong economy. Inflation diminishes the purchasing power of the dollar at home and abroad and is a hidden tax on the American people. Moreover, the inflation tax is regressive, punishes those who save, transfers wealth from Main Street to Wall Street, and has grave implications for seniors living on fixed incomes.

Because the Federal Reserve’s monetary policy actions affect both inflation and economic activity, those actions should be transparent. Moreover, the Fed’s important role as a lender of last resort should also be carried out in a more transparent manner. A free society demands that the sun shine on all elements of government. Therefore, the Republican Party will work to advance substantive legislation that brings transparency and accountability to the Federal Reserve, the Federal Open Market Committee, and the Fed’s dealings with foreign central banks. The first step to increasing transparency and accountability is through an annual audit of the Federal Reserve’s activities. Such an audit would need to be carefully implemented so that the Federal Reserve remains insulated from political pressures and so its decisions are based on sound economic principles and sound money rather than on political

pressures for easy money and loose credit.

Determined to crush the double-digit inflation that was part of the Carter Administration’s economic legacy, President Reagan, shortly after his inauguration, established a commission to consider the feasibility of a metallic basis for U.S. currency. The commission advised against such a move. Now, three decades later, as we face the task of cleaning up the wreckage of the current Administration’s policies, we propose a similar commission to investigate possible ways to set a fixed value for the dollar.

Ending the Housing Crisis and Expanding Opportunities for Homeownership

Homeownership expands personal liberty, builds communities, and helps Americans create wealth. “The American Dream” is not a stale slogan. It is the lived reality that expresses the aspirations of all our people. It means a decent place to live, a safe place to raise kids, a welcoming place to retire. It speaks the quiet pride of those who work hard to shelter their family and, in the process, create caring neighborhoods. Homeownership is best fostered by a growing economy with low interest rates, as well as prudent regulation, financial education, and targeted assistance to responsible borrowers.

The collapse of the housing market over the last four years has been not only a severe blow to the entire economy, but also a personal tragedy to millions of Americans whose homes have lost value and to so many others who have lost their homes. Combined with high unemployment, that decline has left countless homeowners saddled with mortgages exceeding the value of their homes. The response of the current Administration has done little to improve, and much to worsen, the situation. By discouraging private sector investment, it has stalled the housing recovery. Its massive intervention in the housing market, with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac backing nearly all new mortgages, has hit the taxpayers with a bill for almost \$200 billion to bail out the latter two institutions. It has spent billions more on poorly designed and ineffective housing assistance programs. Making matters worse, the Congress, under Democrat control, enacted the Dodd-Frank Act, a massive labyrinth of

costly new regulations that deter lenders from lending to creditworthy homebuyers and that disproportionately harms small and community banks. As a result, home sales remain weak, investment in housing remains depressed, construction industry jobs remain down, and mortgage lending has yet to recover to pre-crisis levels.

Rebuilding Homeownership

We must establish a mortgage finance system based on competition and free enterprise that is transparent, encourages the private sector to return to housing, and promotes personal responsibility on the part of borrowers. Policies that promote reliance on private capital, like private mortgage insurance, will be critical to scaling back the federal role in the housing market and avoiding future taxpayer bailouts. Reforms should provide clear and prudent underwriting standards and guidelines on acceptable lending practices. Compliance with regulatory standards should provide a legal safe harbor to guard against opportunistic litigation. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were a primary cause of the housing crisis because their implicit government guarantee allowed them to avoid market discipline and make risky investments. Their favored political status enriched their politically-connected executives and their shareholders at the expense of the nation. Both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac should be wound down in size and scope, and their officials should be held to account.

The FHA, tripled in size to more than \$1 trillion under the current Administration, has crowded out the private sector and is at risk of requiring a taxpayer bailout. It must be downsized and limited to helping first-time homebuyers and low- and moderate-income borrowers. Taxpayer dollars should not be used to bail out borrowers and lenders by funding principal write-downs. While the federal government must prosecute mortgage fraud and other financial crimes, any settlements received thereby should be directed to individuals harmed by the misconduct, not diverted to pay for unrelated programs.

FDIC insurance for bank depositors must be preserved. However, to correct for the moral hazard created by deposit insurance, banks should be well capitalized, which is the best insurance against future taxpayer bailouts.

The federal government has a role in housing by enforcing non-discrimination laws and assisting low-income families and the elderly with safe and adequate shelter, especially through the use of housing vouchers. Homeownership is an important goal, but public policy must be balanced to reflect the needs of Americans who choose to rent. A comprehensive housing policy should address the demand for apartments and multi-family housing. Any assistance should be subject to stringent oversight to ensure that funds are spent wisely.

Infrastructure: Building the Future

America's infrastructure networks are critical for economic growth, international competitiveness, and national security. Infrastructure programs have traditionally been non-partisan; everyone recognized that we all need clean water and safe roads, rail, bridges, ports, and airports. The current Administration has changed that, replacing civil engineering with social engineering as it pursues an exclusively urban vision of dense housing and government transit. In the vaunted stimulus package, less than six percent of the funds went to transportation, with most of that to cosmetic "shovel-ready" projects rather than fundamental structural improvements. All the while, the Democrats' Davis-Bacon law continues to drive up infrastructure construction and maintenance costs for the benefit of that party's union stalwarts.

What most Americans take for granted—the safety and availability of our water supply—is in perilous condition. Engineering surveys report crumbling drinking water systems, aging dams, and overwhelmed wastewater infrastructure. Investment in these areas, as well as with levees and inland waterways, can renew communities, attract businesses, and create jobs. Most importantly, it can assure the health and safety of the American people.

The nation's ports have become a bottleneck in international trade. America's exporters sometimes use Canadian ports in order to reach the world market in a timely manner. With the widening of the Panama Canal, our East Coast and Gulf ports have an extraordinary opportunity to boost container traffic but require major improvement to remain competitive receivers of large vessels.

Interstate infrastructure has long been a federal responsibility shared with the States, and a renewed federal-State partnership and new public-private partnerships are urgently needed to maintain and modernize our country's travel lifelines to facilitate economic growth and job creation. In the last two years, Congressional Republicans have taken the lead with initiatives like the FAA Modernization and Reform Act; the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act; and the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act. The recent highway bill reforming the federal highway program included some key reforms. It will shorten the project approval process, eliminate unnecessary programs, and give States more flexibility to address their particular needs. It is a return to the principles of federalism, and it contains not a single earmark. It should be followed by reform of the 42-year old National Environmental Policy Act to create regulatory certainty for infrastructure projects, expedite their timetables, and limit litigation against them.

Securing sufficient funding for the Highway Trust Fund remains a challenge given the debt and deficits and the need to reduce spending. Republicans will make hard choices and set priorities, and infrastructure will be among them. In some States with elected officials dominated by the Democratic Party, a proportion of highway funds is diverted to other purposes. This must stop. We oppose any funding mechanism that would involve governmental monitoring of every car and truck in the nation.

Amtrak continues to be, for the taxpayers, an extremely expensive railroad. The public has to subsidize every ticket nearly \$50. It is long past time for the federal government to get out of way and allow private ventures to provide passenger service to the northeast corridor. The same holds true with regard to high-speed and intercity rail across the country.

**International Trade:
More American Jobs, Higher Wages, and A
Better Standard of Living**

International trade is crucial for our economy. It means more American jobs, higher wages, and a better standard of living. Every \$1 billion in additional

U.S. exports means another 5,000 jobs here at home. The Free Trade Agreements negotiated with friendly democracies since President Reagan's trailblazing pact with Israel in 1985 facilitated the creation of nearly ten million jobs supported by our exports. That record makes all the more deplorable the current Administration's slowness in completing agreements begun by its predecessor and its failure to pursue any new trade agreements with friendly nations.

This worldwide explosion of trade has had a downside, however, as some governments have used a variety of unfair means to limit American access to their markets while stealing our designs, patents, brands, know-how, and technology—the "intellectual property" that drives innovation. The chief offender is China, which has built up its economy in part by piggybacking onto Western technological advances, manipulates its currency to the disadvantage of American exporters, excludes American products from government purchases, subsidizes Chinese companies to give them a commercial advantage, and invents regulations and standards designed to keep out foreign competition. The current Administration's way of dealing with all these violations of world trade standards has been a virtual surrender.

Republicans understand that you can succeed in a negotiation only if you are willing to walk away from it. Thus, a Republican President will insist on full parity in trade with China and stand ready to impose countervailing duties if China fails to amend its currency policies. Commercial discrimination will be met in kind. Counterfeit goods will be aggressively kept out of the country. Victimized private firms will be encouraged to raise claims in both U.S. courts and at the World Trade Organization. Punitive measures will be imposed on foreign firms that misappropriate American technology and intellectual property. Until China abides by the WTO's Government Procurement Agreement, the United States government will end procurement of Chinese goods and services.

Because American workers have shown that, on a truly level playing field, they can surpass the competition in international trade, we call for the restoration of presidential Trade Promotion Authority. It will ensure up or down votes in Congress on any new trade agreements, without meddling by special inter-

ests. A Republican President will complete negotiations for a Trans-Pacific Partnership to open rapidly developing Asian markets to U.S. products. Beyond that, we envision a worldwide multilateral agreement among nations committed to the principles of open markets, what has been called a “Reagan Economic Zone,” in which free trade will truly be fair trade for all concerned.

A Twenty-First Century Workforce

The greatest asset of the American economy is the hard-working American. The high rates of unemployment over the last three and a half years—disastrously high among youth, minorities, and veterans—have thus been a tragic waste of energy and ideas, compounded by the waste of billions in “stimulus” funds with no payoff in jobs. The chief cause has been an unprecedented uncertainty in the American free enterprise system due to the overreaching policies of the current Administration. Nothing matters more than getting the American people back to work. In addition to cutting spending, keeping taxes low, and curtailing bureaucratic red tape, we must replace outdated policies and ineffectual training programs with a plan to develop a twenty-first century workforce to make the most of our country’s human capital.

It is critical that the United States has a highly trained and skilled workforce. Nine federal agencies currently run 47 retraining programs at a total cost of \$18 billion annually with dismal results. Both the trainees in those programs and the taxpayers who fund them deserve better. We propose consolidation of those programs into State block grants so that training can be coordinated with local schools and employers. That will be critically important if States establish Personal Reemployment Accounts, letting trainees direct resources in ways that will steer them toward long-term employment, especially through on-the-job training with participating employers.

We can accelerate the process of restoring our domestic economy—and reclaiming this country’s traditional position of dominance in international

trade—by a policy of strategic immigration, granting more work visas to holders of advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math from other nations. Highly educated immigrants can assist in creating new services and products. In the same way, foreign students who graduate from an American university with an advanced degree in science, technology, engineering or math should be encouraged to remain here and contribute to economic prosperity and job creation. Highly skilled, English-speaking, and integrated into their communities, they are too valuable a resource to lose. As in past generations, we should encourage the world’s innovators and inventors to create our common future and their permanent homes here in the United States.

Republicans believe that the employer-employee relationship of the future will be built upon employee empowerment and workplace flexibility, which is why Republicans support employee ownership. We believe

employee stock ownership plans create capitalists and expand the ownership of private property and are therefore the essence of a high-performing free enterprise economy, which creates opportunity for those who work and honors those values that have made our nation so strong. Today’s workforce is independent, wants flexibility in working conditions, needs family-friendly options, and is

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most productive when allowed to innovate and rethink the status quo. The federal government should set an example in making those adaptations, especially in promoting portability in pension plans and health insurance.

Freedom in the Workplace

The current Administration has chosen a different path with regard to labor, clinging to antiquated notions of confrontation and concentrating power in the Washington offices of union elites. It has strongly supported the anti-business card check legislation to deny workers a secret ballot in union organizing campaigns and, through the use of Project Labor Agreements, barred 80 percent of the construction

workforce from competing for jobs in many stimulus projects. The current Administration has turned the National Labor Relations Board into a partisan advocate for Big Labor, using threats and coercion outside the law to attack businesses and, through “snap elections” and “micro unions,” limit the rights of workers and employers alike.

We will restore the rule of law to labor law by blocking “card check,” enacting the Secret Ballot Protection Act, enforcing the Hobbs Act against labor violence, and passing the Raise Act to allow all workers to receive well-earned raises without the approval of their union representative. We demand an end to the Project Labor Agreements; and we call for repeal of the Davis-Bacon Act, which costs the taxpayers billions of dollars annually in artificially high wages on government projects. We support the right of States to enact Right-to-Work laws and encourage them to do so to promote greater economic liberty.

Ultimately, we support the enactment of a National Right-to-Work law to promote worker freedom and to promote greater economic liberty. We will aggressively enforce the recent decision by the Supreme Court barring the use of union dues for political purposes without the consent of the worker.

We salute the Republican Governors and State legislators who have saved their States from fiscal disaster by reforming their laws governing public employee unions. We urge elected officials across the country to follow their lead in order to avoid State and local defaults on their obligations and the collapse of services to the public. To safeguard the free choice of public employees, no government at any level should act as the dues collector for unions. A Republican President will protect the rights of conscience of public employees by proposing legislation to bar mandatory dues for political purposes.

We The People: A Restoration of Constitutional Government



We are the party of the Constitution, the solemn compact which confirms our God-given individual rights and assures that all Americans stand equal before the law. Perhaps the greatest political document ever written, it defines the purposes and limits of government and is the blueprint for ordered liberty that makes the U.S. the world's freest, most stable, and most prosperous nation. Its Constitutional ideals have been emulated around the world, and with them has come unprecedented prosperity for billions of people.

In the spirit of the Constitution, we consider discrimination based on sex, race, age, religion, creed, disability, or national origin unacceptable and immoral. We will strongly enforce anti-discrimination statutes and ask all to join us in rejecting the forces of hatred and bigotry and in denouncing all who practice or promote racism, anti-Semitism, ethnic prejudice, or religious intolerance. We support efforts to help low-income individuals get a fair chance based on their potential and individual merit; but we reject preferences, quotas, and set-asides as the best or sole methods through which fairness can be achieved, whether in government, education, or corporate boardrooms. In a free society, the primary role of government is to protect the God-given, inalienable, inherent rights of its citizens, including the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Merit, ability, aptitude, and results should be the factors that determine advancement in our society.

The Republican Party includes Americans from every faith and tradition, and our policies and positions respect the right of every American to follow his or her beliefs and underscore our reverence for the religious freedom envisioned by the Founding Fathers of our nation and of our party.

We are the party of the
Constitution, the solemn
compact which confirms our
God-given individual rights and
assures that all Americans stand
equal before the law.

As a matter of principle, we oppose the creation of any new race-based governments within the United States.

A Restoration of Constitutional Order: Congress and the Executive

We salute Republican Members of the House of Representatives for enshrining in the Rules of the House the requirement that every bill must cite the provision of the Constitution which permits its introduction. Their adherence to the Constitution stands in stark contrast to the antipathy toward the Constitution demonstrated by the current Administration and its Senate allies by appointing "czars" to evade the confirmation process, making unlawful "recess" appointments when the Senate is not in recess, using executive orders to bypass the separation of powers and its checks and balances, encouraging illegal actions by regulatory agencies from the NLRB to the EPA, openly and notoriously displaying contempt for Congress, the

Judiciary, and the Constitutional prerogatives of the individual States, refusing to defend the nation's laws in federal courts or enforce them on the streets, ignoring the legal requirement for legislative enactment of an annual budget, gutting welfare reform by unilaterally removing its statutory work requirement, buying senatorial votes with special favors, and evading the legal requirement for congressional consultation regarding troop commitments overseas. A Republican President and Republican Senate will join House Republicans in living by the rule of law, the foundation of the American Republic.

Protecting America is the first and most important duty of our federal government. The Constitution wisely distributes important roles in the area of national security to both the President and Congress.

It empowers the President to serve as Commander in Chief, making him the lead instrument of the American people in matters of national security and foreign affairs. It also bestows authority on Congress, including the powers to declare war, regulate commerce, and authorize the funds needed to keep and protect our Nation. The United States of America is strongest when the President and Congress work closely together—in war and in peace—to advance our common interests and ideals. By uniting our government and our citizens, our foreign policy will secure freedom, keep America safe, and ensure that we remain the “last best hope on Earth.”

Defending Marriage Against An Activist Judiciary

A serious threat to our country’s constitutional order, perhaps even more dangerous than presidential malfeasance, is an activist judiciary, in which some judges usurp the powers reserved to other branches of government. A blatant example has been the court-ordered redefinition of marriage in several States. This is more than a matter of warring legal concepts and ideals. It is an assault on the foundations of our society, challenging the institution which, for thousands of years in virtually every civilization, has been entrusted with the rearing of children and the transmission of cultural values.

A Sacred Contract: Defense of Marriage

That is why Congressional Republicans took the lead in enacting the Defense of Marriage Act, affirming the right of States and the federal government not to recognize same-sex relationships licensed in other jurisdictions. The current Administration’s open defiance of this constitutional principle—in its handling of immigration cases, in federal personnel benefits, in allowing a same-sex marriage at a military base, and in refusing to defend DOMA in the courts—makes a mockery of the President’s inaugural oath. We commend the United States House of Representatives and State Attorneys General who have defended these laws when they have been attacked in the courts. We reaffirm our support for a Constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman. We applaud the citizens of the majority of States which have enshrined in their

constitutions the traditional concept of marriage, and we support the campaigns underway in several other States to do so.

Living Within Our Means: A Constitutional Budget

Republican Members of Congress have repeatedly tried to reform the budget process to make it more transparent and accountable, in particular by voting for a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution, following the lead of 33 States which have put that restraint into their own constitutions. We call for a Constitutional amendment requiring a super-majority for any tax increase with exceptions for only war and national emergencies, and imposing a cap limiting spending to the historical average percentage of GDP so that future Congresses cannot balance the budget by raising taxes.

Federalism and The Tenth Amendment

We support the review and examination of all federal agencies to eliminate wasteful spending, operational inefficiencies, or abuse of power to determine whether they are performing functions that are better performed by the States. These functions, as appropriate, should be returned to the States in accordance with the Tenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. We affirm that all legislation, rules, and regulations must conform and public servants must adhere to the U.S. Constitution, as originally intended by the Framers. Whether such legislation is a State or federal matter must be determined in accordance with the Tenth Amendment, in conjunction with Article I, Section 8.

When the Constitution is evaded, transgressed, or ignored, so are the freedoms it guarantees. In that context, the elections of 2012 will be much more than a contest between parties. They are a referendum on the future of liberty in America.

The Republican Party, born in opposition to the denial of liberty, stands for the rights of individuals, families, faith communities, institutions – and of the States which are their instruments of self-government. In establishing a federal system of government, the Framers viewed the States as laboratories of democracy and centers of innovation, as do we. To maintain the integrity of their system, they

bequeathed to successive generations an instrument by which we might correct any misalignment of power between our States and the federal government, the Tenth Amendment:

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

In fidelity to that principle, we condemn the current Administration's continued assaults on State governments in matters ranging from voter ID laws to immigration, from healthcare programs to land use decisions. Our States are the laboratories of democracy from which the people propel our nation forward, solving local and State problems through local and State innovations. We pledge to restore the proper balance between the federal government and the governments closest to, and most reflective of, the American people. Scores of entrenched federal programs violate the constitutional mandates of federalism by taking money from the States, laundering it through various federal agencies, only to return to the States shrunken grants with mandates attached. We propose wherever feasible to leave resources where they originate: in the homes and neighborhoods of the taxpayers. We call on the federal government to do a systematic analysis of laws and regulations to eliminate costly bureaucratic mandates on the States and the people.

With every right comes a responsibility. A few States and their political subdivisions are currently in dire fiscal situations, largely because of their spending, debt, and failure to rein in public employee unions. In the event those conditions worsen, the federal government must not assume the State governments' or their political subdivisions' financial responsibility or require the nation's taxpayers to pay for the misrule of a few State governments. Nor shall the States assume the federal government's financial responsibility.

The Continuing Importance of Protecting the Electoral College

We oppose the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact or any other scheme to abolish or distort the procedures of the Electoral College. We recognize that an unconstitutional effort to impose "national

popular vote" would be a mortal threat to our federal system and a guarantee of corruption as every ballot box in every state would become a chance to steal the presidency.

Voter Integrity to Ensure Honest Elections

Honest elections are the foundation of representative government. We support State efforts to ensure ballot access for the elderly, the handicapped, military personnel, and all authorized voters. For the same reason, we applaud legislation to require photo identification for voting and to prevent election fraud, particularly with regard to registration and absentee ballots. We support State laws that require proof of citizenship at the time of voter registration to protect our electoral system against a significant and growing form of voter fraud. Every time that a fraudulent vote is cast, it effectively cancels out a vote of a legitimate voter.

Voter fraud is political poison. It strikes at the heart of representative government. We call on every citizen, elected official, and member of the judiciary to preserve the integrity of the vote. We call for vigorous prosecution of voter fraud at the State and federal level. To do less disenfranchises present and future generations. We recognize that having a physical verification of the vote is the best way to ensure a fair election. "Let ambition counter ambition," as James Madison said. When all parties have representatives observing the counting of ballots in a transparent process, integrity is assured. We strongly support the policy that all electronic voting systems have a voter verified paper audit trail.

States or political subdivisions that use all-mail elections cannot ensure the integrity of the ballot. When ballots are mailed to every registered voter, ballots can be stolen or fraudulently voted by unauthorized individuals because the system does not have a way to verify the identity of the voter. We call for States and political subdivisions to adopt voting systems that can verify the identity of the voter.

Military men and women must not be disenfranchised from the very freedom they defend. We affirm that our troops, wherever stationed, be allowed to vote and those votes be counted in the November election and in all elections. To that end, the entire chain of command, from President and the Secretary of Defense, to base and unit commanders—must en-

sure the timely receipt and return of all ballots and the utilization of electronic delivery of ballots where allowed by State law.

We support changing the way that the decennial census is conducted, so that citizens are distinguished from lawfully present aliens and illegal aliens. In order to preserve the principle of one-person, one-vote, the apportionment of representatives among the States should be according to the number of citizens.

**The First Amendment:
The Foresight of Our Founders to
Protect Religious Freedom**

The first provision of the First Amendment concerns freedom of religion. That guarantee reflected Thomas Jefferson’s Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, which declared that no one should “suffer on account of his religious opinion or belief, but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion....” That assurance has never been more needed than it is today, as liberal elites try to drive religious beliefs—and religious believers—out of the public square. The Founders of the American Republic universally agree that democracy presupposes a moral people and that, in the words of George Washington’s Farewell Address, “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports.”

The most offensive instance of this war on religion has been the current Administration’s attempt to compel faith-related institutions, as well as believing individuals, to contravene their deeply held religious, moral, or ethical beliefs regarding health services, traditional marriage, or abortion. This forcible secularization of religious and religiously affiliated organizations, including faith-based hospitals and colleges, has been in tandem with the current Administration’s audacity in declaring which faith-related activities are, or are not, protected by the First Amendment—an unprecedented aggression repudiated by a unanimous Supreme Court in its *Hosanna-Tabor v. EEOC* decision.

We pledge to respect the religious beliefs and rights of conscience of all Americans and to safeguard the independence of their institutions from government. We support the public display of the Ten Com-

mandments as a reflection of our history and of our country’s Judeo-Christian heritage, and we affirm the right of students to engage in prayer at public school events in public schools and to have equal access to public schools and other public facilities to accommodate religious freedom in the public square. We assert every citizen’s right to apply religious values to public policy and the right of faith-based organizations to participate fully in public programs without renouncing their beliefs, removing religious symbols, or submitting to government-imposed hiring practices. We oppose government discrimination against businesses due to religious views. We support the First Amendment right of freedom of association of the Boy Scouts of America and other service organizations whose values are under assault and condemn the State blacklisting of religious groups which decline to arrange adoptions by same-sex couples. We condemn the hate campaigns, threats of violence, and vandalism by proponents of same-sex marriage against advocates of traditional marriage and call for a federal investigation into attempts to deny religious believers their civil rights.

**The First Amendment:
Speech that is Protected**

The rights of citizenship do not stop at the ballot box. They include the free speech right to devote one’s resources to whatever cause or candidate one supports. We oppose any restrictions or conditions that would discourage Americans from exercising their constitutional right to enter the political fray or limit their commitment to their ideals. As a result, we support repeal of the remaining sections of McCain-Feingold, support either raising or repealing contribution limits, and oppose passage of the DISCLOSE Act or any similar legislation designed to vitiate the Supreme Court’s recent decisions protecting political speech in *Wisconsin Right to Life v. Federal Election Commission* and *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. We insist that there should be no regulation of political speech on the Internet. By the same token, we oppose governmental censorship of speech through the so-called Fairness Doctrine or by government enforcement of speech codes, free speech zones, or other forms of “political correctness” on campus.

The Second Amendment: Our Right to Keep and Bear Arms

We uphold the right of individuals to keep and bear arms, a right which antedated the Constitution and was solemnly confirmed by the Second Amendment. We acknowledge, support, and defend the law-abiding citizen's God-given right of self-defense. We call for the protection of such fundamental individual rights recognized in the Supreme Court's decisions in *District of Columbia v. Heller* and *McDonald v. Chicago* affirming that right, and we recognize the individual responsibility to safely use and store firearms. This also includes the right to obtain and store ammunition without registration. We support the fundamental right to self-defense wherever a law-abiding citizen has a legal right to be, and we support federal legislation that would expand the exercise of that right by allowing those with state-issued carry permits to carry firearms in any state that issues such permits to its own residents. Gun ownership is responsible citizenship, enabling Americans to defend their homes and communities. We condemn frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers and oppose federal licensing or registration of law-abiding gun owners. We oppose legislation that is intended to restrict our Second Amendment rights by limiting the capacity of clips or magazines or otherwise restoring the ill-considered Clinton gun ban. We condemn the reckless actions associated with the operation known as "Fast and Furious," conducted by the Department of Justice, which resulted in the murder of a U.S. Border Patrol Agent and others on both sides of the border. We applaud the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives in holding the current Administration's Attorney General in contempt of Congress for his refusal to cooperate with their investigation into that debacle. We oppose the improper collection of firearms sales information in the four southern border states, which was imposed without congressional authority.

The Fourth Amendment: Liberty and Privacy

Affirming "the right of the people to be secure in their houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures," we support pending legislation to prevent unwarranted or unreasonable governmental intrusion through the use of aerial sur-

veillance or flyovers on U.S. soil, with the exception of patrolling our national borders. All security measures and police actions should be viewed through the lens of the Fourth Amendment; for if we trade liberty for security, we shall have neither.

The Fifth Amendment: Protecting Private Property

The Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment—"nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation"—is a bulwark against tyranny; for without property rights, individual rights are diminished. That is why we deplore the Supreme Court's *Kelo v. New London* decision, allowing local governments to seize a person's home or land, not for vital public use, but for transfer to private developers. We call on State legislatures to moot the impact of the *Kelo* decision in their States by appropriate legislation or constitutional amendments. Equally important, we pledge to enforce the Takings Clause in the actions of federal agencies to ensure just compensation whenever private property is needed to achieve a compelling public use. This includes the taking of property in the form of water rights in the West and elsewhere and the taking of property by environmental regulations that destroy its value.

The Ninth Amendment: Affirming the People's Rights

This speaks most eloquently for itself: "The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." This provision codifies the concept that our government derives its power from the people and all powers not delegated to the government are retained by the people. This is an essential feature of our governmental system, and we therefore celebrate the grassroots rediscovery of this and other constitutional guarantees over the last four years and welcome to our ranks all our fellow citizens who are determined to reclaim the rights of the people that have been ignored or violated by government.

The Sanctity and Dignity of Human Life

Faithful to the "self-evident" truths enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, we assert the sanctity of human life and affirm that the unborn child

has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution and endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children. We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortion or fund organizations which perform or advocate it and will not fund or subsidize health care which includes abortion coverage. We support the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life. We oppose the non-consensual withholding or withdrawal of care or treatment, including food and water, from people with disabilities, including newborns, as well as the elderly and infirm, just as we oppose active and passive euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Republican leadership has led the effort to prohibit the barbaric practice of partial-birth abortion and permitted States to extend health care coverage to children before birth. We urge Congress to strengthen the Born Alive Infant Protection Act by enacting appropriate civil and criminal penalties on healthcare providers who fail to provide treatment and care to an infant who survives an abortion, including early induction delivery where the death of the infant is intended. We call for legislation to ban sex-selective abortions – gender discrimination in its most lethal form—and to protect from abortion unborn children who are capable of feeling pain; and we applaud U.S. House Republicans for leading the effort to protect the lives of pain-capable unborn children in the District of Columbia. We call for a ban on the use of body parts from aborted fetuses for research. We support and applaud adult stem cell research to develop lifesaving therapies, and we oppose the killing of embryos for their stem cells. We oppose federal funding of embryonic stem cell research.

We also salute the many States that have passed laws for informed consent, mandatory waiting periods prior to an abortion, and health-protective clinic regulation. We seek to protect young girls from exploitation through a parental consent requirement; and we affirm our moral obligation to assist, rather than penalize, women challenged by an unplanned

pregnancy. We salute those who provide them with counseling and adoption alternatives and empower them to choose life, and we take comfort in the tremendous increase in adoptions that has followed Republican legislative initiatives.

Respect for Our Flag: Symbol of the Constitution

The symbol of our constitutional unity, to which we all pledge allegiance, is the flag of the United States of America. By whatever legislative method is most feasible, Old Glory should be given legal protection against desecration. We condemn decisions by activist judges to deny children the opportunity to say the Pledge of Allegiance in its entirety, including “Under God,” in public schools and encourage States to promote the pledge. We condemn the actions of those who deny our children the means by which to show respect for our great country and the constitutional principles represented by our flag.

American Sovereignty in U.S. Courts

Subjecting American citizens to foreign laws is inimical to the spirit of the Constitution. It is one reason we oppose U.S. participation in the International Criminal Court. There must be no use of foreign law by U.S. courts in interpreting our Constitution and laws. Nor should foreign sources of law be used in State courts' adjudication of criminal or civil matters.

The Lacey Act of 1900, designed to protect endangered wildlife in interstate commerce, is now applied worldwide, making it a crime to use, in our domestic industries, any product illegally obtained in the country of origin, whether or not the user had anything to do with its harvesting. This unreasonable extension of the Act not only hurts American businesses and American jobs, but also subordinates our own rule of law to the legal codes of 195 other governments. It must be changed.

Just as George Washington wisely warned America to avoid foreign entanglements and enter into only temporary alliances, we oppose the adoption or ratification of international treaties that weaken or encroach upon American sovereignty.

America's Natural Resources: Energy, Agriculture and the Environment



We are the party of sustainable jobs and economic growth – through American energy, agriculture, and environmental policy. We are also the party of America's growers and producers, farmers, ranchers, foresters, miners, and all those who bring from the earth the minerals and energy that are the lifeblood of our nation's historically strong economy. We are as well the party of traditional conservation: the wise development of resources that keeps in mind both the sacrifices of past generations to secure that bounty and our responsibility to preserve it for future generations.

Domestic Energy Independence: An "All of the Above" Energy Policy

The Republican Party is committed to domestic energy independence. The United States and its neighbors to the North and South have been blessed with abundant energy resources, tapped and untapped, traditional and alternative, that are among the largest and most valuable on earth. Advancing technology has given us a more accurate understanding of the nation's enormous reserves that are ours for the development. The role of public officials must be to encourage responsible development across the board. Unlike the current Administration, we will not pick winners and losers in the energy marketplace. Instead, we will let the free market and the public's preferences determine the industry outcomes. In assessing the various sources of potential energy, Republicans advocate an all-of-the-above diversified approach, taking advantage of all our American God-given resources. That is the best way to advance North American energy independence.

Our policies aim at energy security to ensure an affordable, stable, and reliable energy supply for all parts of the country and all sectors of the economy. Energy security is intimately linked to national security both in terms of our current dependence upon foreign supplies and because some of the hundreds

of billions of dollars we pay for foreign oil ends up in the hands of terrorist groups that wish to harm us. A growing, prosperous economy and our standard of living and quality of life, moreover, depend on affordable and abundant domestic energy supplies.

A strong and stable energy sector is a job generator and a catalyst of economic growth, not only in the labor-intensive energy industry but also in its secondary markets. The Republican Party will encourage and ensure diversified domestic sources of energy, from research and development, exploration, production, transportation, transmission, and consumption in a way that is economically viable and job-producing, as well as environmentally sound. When our energy industry is revitalized, millions more Americans will find work in manufacturing, food production, metals, minerals, packaging, transportation and other fields – because of the jobs that will be created in, and as a result of, the energy sector. We are determined to create jobs, spur economic growth, lower energy prices, and strengthen our energy industry.

Our Nation's Energy Abundance

Coal is a low-cost and abundant energy source with hundreds of years of supply. We look toward the private sector's development of new, state-of-the-art coal-fired plants that will be low-cost, environmentally responsible, and efficient. We also encourage research and development of advanced technologies in this sector, including coal-to-liquid, coal gasification, and related technologies for enhanced oil recovery.

The current Administration—with a President who publicly threatened to bankrupt anyone who builds a coal-powered plant—seems determined to shut down coal production in the United States, even though there is no cost-effective substitute for it or for the hundreds of thousands of jobs that go with it as the nation's largest source of electricity generation.

We will end the EPA's war on coal and encourage the increased safe development in all regions of the nation's coal resources, the jobs it produces, and the affordable, reliable energy that it provides for America. Further, we oppose any and all cap and trade legislation.

All estimates of America's **oil and natural gas** reserves indicate an incredible bounty for the use of many generations to come. At a time when unemployment has been above 8 percent for 42 consecutive months, the longest stretch since the Great Depression, and some 23 million Americans are either unemployed, underemployed, or have given up on finding work, we should be pursuing our oil and gas resources both on and offshore. It is nonsensical to spurn real job creation by putting almost all of our coastal waters off limits to energy exploration, while urging other nations to explore their coasts. We call for a reasoned approach to all offshore energy development on the East Coast and other appropriate waters, and support the right of States to a reasonable share of the resulting revenue and royalties. We support opening the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) for energy exploration and development and ending the current Administration's moratorium on permitting; opening the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) for exploration and production of oil and natural gas; and allowing for more oil and natural gas exploration on federally owned and controlled land. We support this development in accordance with applicable environmental, health and safety laws, and regulations.

The current President personally blocked one of the most important energy and jobs projects in years. The Keystone XL Pipeline—which would have brought much needed Canadian and American oil to U.S. refineries—would create thousands of jobs. The current President's job-killing combination of extremism and ineptitude threatens to create a permanent energy shortage. We are committed to approving the Keystone XL Pipeline and to streamlining

permitting for the development of other oil and natural gas pipelines.

Nuclear energy, now generating about 20 percent of our electricity through 104 power plants, must be expanded. No new nuclear generating plants have been licensed and constructed for thirty years. We call for timely processing of new reactor applications currently pending at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The federal government's failure to address the storage and disposal of spent nuclear fuel has left huge bills for States and taxpayers. Our country needs a more proactive approach to managing spent nuclear fuel, including through developing advanced reprocessing technologies.

We encourage the cost-effective development of **renewable energy**, but the taxpayers should not serve as venture capitalists for risky endeavors. It is important to create a pathway toward a market-based approach for renewable energy sources and to aggressively develop alternative sources for electricity generation

such as wind, hydro, solar, biomass, geothermal, and tidal energy. Partnerships between traditional energy industries and emerging renewable industries can be a central component in meeting the nation's long-term needs. Alternative forms of energy are part of our action agenda to power the homes and workplaces of the nation.

Pulling the Plug on American Energy Independence: The Failure of the Current Administration

The current Administration has used taxpayer dollars to pick winners and losers in the energy sector while publicly threatening to bankrupt anyone who builds a new coal-fired plant and has stopped the Keystone XL Pipeline. The current President has done nothing to disavow the scare campaign against hydraulic fracturing. Furthermore, he has wasted billions of taxpayers' dollars by subsidizing favored companies like Solyndra, which generated bankruptcies rather than kilowatts.

Unlike the current Administration, we will not pick winners and losers in the energy marketplace. Instead, we will let the free market and the public's preferences determine the industry outcomes.

Since the current President took office in 2009, consumers pay approximately twice as much for gas at the pump. Our common theme is to promote development of all forms of energy, enable consumer choice to keep energy costs low, and ensure that America remains competitive in the global marketplace. We will respect the States' proven ability to regulate the use of hydraulic fracturing, continue development of oil and gas resources in places like the Bakken formation and Marcellus Shale, and review the environmental laws that often thwart new energy exploration and production. We salute the Republican Members of the House of Representatives for passing the Domestic Energy and Jobs Act, a vital piece of pro-growth legislation now introduced by Republicans in the Senate.

Agriculture

Abundant Harvests: Protecting Our Farmers

Agricultural production and agricultural exports are a fundamental part of the U.S. economy, and the vigor of U.S. agriculture is central to our agenda for jobs, growth, and prosperity. Our farmers and ranchers are responsible for millions of jobs and for generating a trade surplus of more than \$137 billion annually. Our producers provide America with abundant food, export food to hungry people around the world, and create a positive trade balance. Because of their care for the land, the United States does not depend on foreign imports for sustenance the way we depend on others for much of our energy. However, Americans are concerned about the increasing cost of their food under the current Administration policies that restrict energy production and raise costs for producers due to increased regulation. Our dependence on foreign imports of fertilizer could threaten our food supply, and we support the development of domestic production of fertilizer. The success of our system of risk management policies will enable farmers and ranchers to continue to feed and fuel the nation and much of the world.

Restoring Economic Stability for Our Farmers

Uncertainty is threatening the survival of our nation's farmers. America's growers and farmers are aging and much of America's farmland will be passed

to the next generation of farmers with families. Uncertainties in estate and capital gains tax laws threaten the survival of multigenerational family farms. The proposals for tax reforms contained elsewhere in this document will make certain that family farms will not be lost.

The Proper Federal Role in Agriculture

Agricultural producers and the jobs they generate throughout the entire food chain must confront volatility in both the weather and the markets. We support farm programs that enable them to manage the extraordinary risk they meet in the fields every year. These programs should be as cost-effective as they are functional, offering risk management tools that improve producers' ability to operate when times are tough.

Just as all other federal programs must contribute to the deficit reduction necessary to put our country back on a sound fiscal footing, so must farm programs contribute to balancing the budget.

Programs like the Direct Payment program should end in favor of those, like crop insurance, that help manage risk and are counter-cyclical in nature.

We support the historic role of the USDA in agricultural research that has transformed farming here and around the world. Because food safety is a major concern of the American people, we urge Congress to ensure adequate resources for the Department's responsibilities in that regard.

The U. S. Forest Service controls about 193 million acres of land and employs 30,000 workers. The Forest Service should be charged to use these resources to the best economic potential for the nation. We must limit injunctions by activist judges regarding environmental management. In order to secure one of the country's most important natural resources, we will review the way the Forest Service handles wildfires. This summer's lack of rainfall over much of agricultural America highlights the importance of access to water for farmers and ranchers alike. We stand with growers and producers in defense of their water rights against attempts by the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to expand jurisdiction over water, including water that is clearly not navigable.

The productivity of America's farmers makes possible the generosity of U.S. food aid efforts around

the world. These programs are fragmented between the Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Agency for International Development. They should be streamlined into one agency with a concentration on reducing overhead to maximize delivery of the actual goods.

The food stamp program now accounts for nearly 80 percent of the entire USDA budget. In finding ways to fight fraud and abuse, the Congress should consider block-granting that program to the States, along with the other domestic nutrition programs.

Protecting Our Environment

The environment is getting cleaner and healthier. The nation's air and waterways, as a whole, are much healthier than they were just a few decades ago. Efforts to reduce pollution, encourage recycling, educate the public, and avoid ecological degradation have been a success. To ensure their continued support by the American people, however, we need a dramatic change in the attitude of officials in Washington, a shift from a job-killing punitive mentality to a spirit of cooperation with producers, landowners, and the public. An important factor is full transparency in development of the data and modeling that drive regulations. Legislation to restore the authority of States in environmental protection is essential. We encourage the use of agricultural best management practices among the States to reduce pollution.

Our Republican Party's Commitment to Conservation

Conservation is a conservative value. As the pioneer of conservation over a century ago, the Republican Party believes in the moral obligation of the people to be good stewards of the God-given natural beauty and resources of our country and bases environmental policy on several common-sense principles. For example, we believe people are the most

valuable resource, and human health and safety are the most important measurements of success. A policy protecting these objectives, however, must balance economic development and private property rights in the short run with conservation goals over the long run. Also, public access to public lands for recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, and recreational shooting should be permitted on all appropriate federal lands.

Moreover, the advance of science and technology advances environmentalism as well. Science allows us to weigh the costs and benefits of a policy so that we can prudently deal with our resources. This is especially important when the causes and long-range effects of a phenomenon are uncertain. We must restore scientific integrity to our public research institutions and remove political incentives from publicly funded research.

Private Stewardship of the Environment

Experience has shown that, in caring for the land and water, private ownership has been our best guarantee of conscientious stewardship, while the worst instances of environmental degradation have occurred under government control. By the same token, the most economically advanced countries—those that

respect and protect private property rights—also have the strongest environmental protections, because their economic progress makes possible the conservation of natural resources. In this context, Congress should reconsider whether parts of the federal government's enormous landholdings and control of water in the West could be better used for ranching, mining, or forestry through private ownership. Timber is a renewable natural resource, which provides jobs to thousands of Americans. All efforts should be made to make federal lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service available for harvesting. The enduring truth is that people best protect what they own.

It makes sense that those closest to a situation

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are best able to determine its remedy. That is why a site- and situation-specific approach to an environmental problem is more likely to solve it, instead of a national rule based on the ideological concerns of politicized central planning. We therefore endorse legislation to require congressional approval before any rule projected to cost in excess of \$100 million to American consumers can go into effect.

The Republican Party supports appointing public officials to federal agencies who will properly and correctly apply environmental laws and regulations, always in support of economic development, job creation, and American prosperity and leadership. Federal agencies charged with enforcing environmental laws must stop regulating beyond their authority. There is no place in regulatory agencies for activist regulators.

Reining in the EPA

Since 2009, the EPA has moved forward with expansive regulations that will impose tens of billions of dollars in new costs on American businesses and consumers. Many of these new rules are creating regulatory uncertainty, preventing new projects from going forward, discouraging new investment, and stifling job creation.

We demand an end to the EPA's participation in "sue and settle" lawsuits, sweetheart litigation brought by environmental groups to expand the Agency's regulatory activities against the wishes of Congress and the public. We will require full transparency in litigation under the nation's environmental laws, including advance notice to all State and local governments, tribes, businesses, landowners, and the public who could be adversely affected. We likewise support pending legislation to ensure cumulative analysis of EPA regulations, and to require full transparency in all EPA decisions, so that the public will know in advance their full impact on jobs and the economy. We oppose the EPA's unwarranted revocation of existing permits. We also call on Congress to take quick action to prohibit the EPA from moving forward with new greenhouse gas regulations that will harm the nation's economy and threaten millions of jobs over the next quarter century. The most powerful environmental policy is liberty, the central organizing principle of the American Republic and its people. Liberty alone fosters scientific inquiry, technological innovation, entrepreneurship, and information exchange. Liberty must remain the core energy behind America's environmental improvement.

Reforming Government to Serve the People



We are the party of government reform. At a time when the federal government has become bloated, antiquated and unresponsive to taxpayers, it is our intention not only to improve management and provide better services, but also to rethink and restructure government to bring it into the twenty-first century. Government reform requires constant vigilance and effort because government by its nature tends to expand in both size and scope. Our goal is not just less spending in Washington but something far more important for the future of our nation: protecting the constitutional rights of citizens, sustainable prosperity, and strengthening the American family.

It isn't enough to merely downsize government, having a smaller version of the same failed systems. We must do things in a dramatically different way by reversing the undermining of federalism and the centralizing of power in Washington. We look to the example set by Republican Governors and legislators all across the nation. Their leadership in reforming and reengineering government closest to the people vindicates the role of the States as the laboratories of democracy.

Our approach, like theirs, is two-fold. We look to government—local, State, and federal—for the things government must do, but we believe those duties can be carried out more efficiently and at less cost. For all other activities, we look to the private sector; for the American people's resourcefulness, productivity, innovation, fiscal responsibility, and citizen-leadership have always been the true foundation of our national greatness.

For much of the last century, an opposing view has dominated public policy where we have witnessed the expansion, centralization, and bureaucracy in an entitlement society. Government has lumbered on,

stifling innovation, with no incentive for fundamental change, through antiquated programs begun generations ago and now ill-suited to present needs and future requirements. As a result, today's taxpayers—and future generations—face massive indebtedness, while Congressional Democrats and the current Administration block every attempt to turn things around. This man-made log-jam—the so-called stalemate in Washington—particularly affects the government's three largest programs, which have become central to the lives of untold millions of Americans: Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

Saving Medicare for Future Generations

The Republican Party is committed to saving Medicare and Medicaid. Unless the programs' fiscal ship is righted, the individuals hurt the first and the worst will be those who depend on them the most. We will save Medicare by modernizing it, by empowering its participants, and by putting it on a secure financial footing. This will be an enormous undertaking, and it should be a non-partisan one. We welcome to the effort all who sincerely want to ensure the future for our seniors and the poor. Republicans are determined to achieve that goal with a candid and honest presentation of the problem and its solutions

to the American people.

Despite the enormous differences between Medicare and Medicaid, the two programs share the same fiscal outlook: their current courses cannot be sustained. Medicare has grown from more than 20 million enrolled in 1970 to more than 47 million enrolled today, with a projected total of 80 million in 2030. Medicaid counted almost 30 million enrollees in 1990, has about 54 million now, and under Obamacare would include an additional 11 million.

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Medicare spent more than \$520 billion in 2010 and has close to \$37 trillion in unfunded obligations, while total Medicaid spending will more than double by 2019. In many States, Medicaid's mandates and inflexible bureaucracy have become a budgetary black hole, growing faster than most other budget lines and devouring funding for many other essential governmental functions.

The problem goes beyond finances. Poor quality healthcare is the most expensive type of care because it prolongs affliction and leads to ever more complications. Even expensive prevention is preferable to more costly treatment later on. When approximately 80 percent of healthcare costs are related to lifestyle—smoking, obesity, substance abuse—far greater emphasis has to be put upon personal responsibility for health maintenance. Our goal for both Medicare and Medicaid must be to assure that every participant receives the amount of care they need at the time they need it, whether for an expectant mother and her baby or for someone in the last moments of life. Absent reforms, these two programs are headed for bankruptcy that will endanger care for seniors and the poor.

The first step is to move the two programs away from their current unsustainable defined-benefit entitlement model to a fiscally sound defined-contribution model. This is the only way to limit costs and restore consumer choice for patients and introduce competition; for in healthcare, as in any other sector of the economy, genuine competition is the best guarantee of better care at lower cost. It is also the best guard against the fraud and abuse that have plagued Medicare in its isolation from free market forces, which in turn costs the taxpayers billions of dollars every year. We can do this without making any changes for those 55 and older. While retaining the option of traditional Medicare in competition with private plans, we call for a transition to a premium-support model for Medicare, with an income-adjusted contribution toward a health plan of the enrollee's choice. This model will include private health insurance plans that provide catastrophic protection, to ensure the continuation of doctor-patient relationships. Without disadvantaging retirees or those nearing retirement, the age eligibility for Medicare must be made more realistic in terms of today's longer life span.

Strengthening Medicaid in the States

Medicaid, as the dominant payer in the health market in regards to long-term care, births, and individuals with mental illness, is the next frontier of welfare reform. It is simply too big and too flawed to be managed in its current condition from Washington. Republican Governors have taken the lead in proposing a host of regulatory changes that could make the program more flexible, innovative, and accountable. There should be alternatives to hospitalization for chronic health problems. Patients could be rewarded for participating in disease prevention activities. Excessive mandates on coverage should be eliminated. Patients with long-term care needs might fare better in a separately designed program.

As those and other specific proposals show, Republican Governors and State legislatures are ready to do the hard work of modernizing Medicaid for the twenty-first century. We propose to let them do all that and more by block-granting the program to the States, providing the States with the flexibility to design programs that meet the needs of their low income citizens. Such reforms could be achieved through premium supports or a refundable tax credit, allowing non-disabled adults and children to be moved into private health insurance of their choice, where their needs can be met on the same basis as those of more affluent Americans. For the aged and disabled under Medicaid, for whom monthly costs can be extremely high, States would have flexibility to improve the quality of care and to avoid the inappropriate institutional placing of patients who prefer to be cared for at home.

Security For Those Who Need It: Ensuring Retirement Security

While no changes should adversely affect any current or near-retiree, comprehensive reform should address our society's remarkable medical advances in longevity and allow younger workers the option of creating their own personal investment accounts as supplements to the system. Younger Americans have lost all faith in the Social Security system, which is understandable when they read the non-partisan actuary's reports about its future funding status. Born in an old industrial era beyond the mem-

ory of most Americans, it is long overdue for major change, not just another legislative stopgap that postpones a day of reckoning. To restore public trust in the system, Republicans are committed to setting it on a sound fiscal basis that will give workers control over, and a sound return on, their investments. The sooner we act, the sooner those close to retirement can be reassured of their benefits and younger workers can take responsibility for planning their own retirement decades from now.

Unlike Social Security, the problems facing private pension plans are both demographic and ethical. While pension law may be complicated, the current bottom line is that many plans are increasingly underfunded by overestimating their rates of return on investments. This in turn endangers the integrity of the Pension Guaranty Benefit Corporation, which is itself seriously underfunded. In both cases, the taxpayers will be expected to pay for a bailout. As the first step toward possible corrective action, we call for a presidential panel to review the private pension system in this country of only those private pensions that are backed by the Pension Guaranty Benefit Corporation and to make public its findings.

The situation of public pension systems demands immediate remedial action. The irresponsible promises of politicians at every level of government have come back to haunt today's taxpayers with enormous unfunded pension liabilities. Many cities face bankruptcy because of excessive outlays for early retirement, extravagant health plans, and overly generous pension benefits. We salute the Republican Governors and State legislators who have, in the face of abuse and threats of violence, reformed their State pension systems for the benefit of both taxpayers and retirees alike.

Regulatory Reform: The Key to Economic Growth

The proper purpose of regulation is to set forth clear rules of the road for the citizens, so that business owners and workers can understand in advance what they need to do, or not do, to augment the possibilities for success within the confines of the law. Regulations must be drafted and implemented to balance legitimate public safety or consumer protection goals and

job creation. Constructive regulation should be a helpful guide, not a punitive threat. Worst of all, overregulation is a stealth tax on everyone as the costs of compliance with the whims of federal agencies are passed along to the consumers at the cost of \$1.75 trillion a year. Many regulations are necessary, like those which ensure the safety of food and medicine, especially from overseas. But no peril justifies the regulatory impact of Obamacare on the practice of medicine, the Dodd-Frank Act on financial services, or the EPA's and OSHA's overreaching regulation agenda. A Republican Congress and President will repeal the first and second, and rein in the third. We support a sunset requirement to force reconsideration of out-of-date regulations, and we endorse pending legislation to require congressional approval for all new major and costly regulations.

The bottom line on regulations is jobs. In listening to America, one constant we have heard is the job-crippling effect of even well-intentioned regulation. That makes it all the more important for federal agencies to be judicious about the impositions they create on businesses, especially small businesses. We call for a moratorium on the development of any new major and costly regulations until a Republican Administration reviews existing rules to ensure that they have a sound basis in science and will be cost-effective.

Protecting Internet Freedom

The Internet has unleashed innovation, enabled growth, and inspired freedom more rapidly and extensively than any other technological advance in human history. Its independence is its power. The Internet offers a communications system uniquely free from government intervention. We will remove regulatory barriers that protect outdated technologies and business plans from innovation and competition, while preventing legacy regulation from interfering with new and disruptive technologies such as mobile delivery of voice video data as they become crucial components of the Internet ecosystem. We will resist any effort to shift control away from the successful multi-stakeholder approach of Internet governance and toward governance by international or other intergovernmental organizations. We will ensure that personal data receives full constitutional protection from government overreach and that individuals re-

tain the right to control the use of their data by third parties; the only way to safeguard or improve these systems is through the private sector.

A Vision for the Twenty-First Century: Technology, Telecommunications and the Internet

The most vibrant sector of the American economy, indeed, one-sixth of it, is regulated by the federal government on precedents from the nineteenth century. Today's technology and telecommunications industries are overseen by the Federal Communications Commission, established in 1934 and given the jurisdiction over telecommunications formerly assigned to the Interstate Commerce Commission, which had been created in 1887 to regulate the railroads. This is not a good fit. Indeed, the development of telecommunications advances so rapidly that even the Telecom Act of 1996 is woefully out of date. An industry that invested \$66 billion in 2011 alone needs, and deserves, a more modern relationship with the federal government for the benefit of consumers here and worldwide.

The current Administration has been frozen in the past. It has conducted no auction of spectrum, has offered no incentives for investment, and, through the FCC's net neutrality rule, is trying to micromanage telecom as if it were a railroad network. It inherited from the previous Republican Administration 95 percent coverage of the nation with broadband. It will leave office with no progress toward the goal of universal coverage – after spending \$7.2 billion more. That hurts rural America, where farmers, ranchers, and small business manufacturers need connectivity to expand their customer base and operate in real time with the world's producers. We encourage public-private partnerships to provide predictable support for connecting rural areas so that every American can fully participate in the global economy.

We call for an inventory of federal agency spectrum to determine the surplus that could be auc-

tioned for the taxpayers' benefit. With special recognition of the role university technology centers are playing in attracting private investment to the field, we will replace the administration's Luddite approach to technological progress with a regulatory partnership that will keep this country the world leader in technology and telecommunications.

Protecting the Taxpayers: No More "Too Big to Fail"

For more than a century, the U.S. was the world leader in financial services. The visionary management of capital was the lifeblood of the entire economy. By giving responsible access to credit, it helped small businesses grow, created jobs, and made Americans the best-housed people in history. By funding innovation, financial services underwrote our future. Then came the financial collapse of 2008 and a critical

reassessment of the role and condition of financial institutions—most of which, it must be said, were responsible and healthy, especially those closest to their investors and borrowers.

In cases of malfeasance or other criminal behavior, the full force of the law should be used. But in all cases, this rule must apply: No financial institution is too big to fail. The taxpayers must never again be on the hook for the

losses of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. The public must never again be left holding the bag for Wall Street giants, which is why we decry the current Administration's record of over-regulation and selective intervention, which has already frozen investment and job creation and threatens to make financial institutions the coddled wards of government.

A far better approach—protecting consumers and taxpayers alike—is institutional transparency. Banks need to know that they could be at risk, and investors need clear rules that are not subject to political meddling. The same holds true for the equity market regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission. We propose reasonable federal oversight of financial institutions, practical safeguards for consumers, and – what is crucial for this country's economic re-

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bound – sound spending, tax, and regulatory policies that will allow those institutions to once again become the builders of the next American century. We strongly support tax reform; in the event we do not achieve this, we must preserve the mortgage interest deduction.

**Judicial Activism:
A Threat to the U.S. Constitution**

Despite improvements as a result of Republican nominations to the judiciary, some judges in the federal courts remain far afield from their constitutional limitations. The U.S. Constitution is the law of the land. Judicial activism which includes reliance on foreign law or unratified treaties undermines American law. The sole solution, apart from impeachment, is the appointment of constitutionalist jurists, who will interpret the law as it was originally intended rather than make it. That is both a presidential responsibility, in selecting judicial candidates, and a senatorial responsibility, in confirming them. We urge Republican Senators to do all in their power to prevent the elevation of additional leftist ideologues to the courts, particularly in the waning days of the current Administration.

In addition to appointing activist judges, the current Administration has included an activist and highly partisan Department of Justice. With a Republican Administration, the Department will stop suing States for exercising those powers reserved to the States, will stop abusing its preclearance authority to block photo-ID voting laws, and will fulfill its responsibility to defend all federal laws in court, including the Defense of Marriage Act.

**Restructuring the U.S. Postal Service
for the Twenty-First Century**

The dire financial circumstances of the Postal Service require dramatic restructuring. In a world of rapidly advancing telecommunications, mail delivery from the era of the Pony Express cannot long survive. We call on Congress to restructure the Service to ensure the continuance of its essential function of delivering mail while preparing for the downsizing made inevitable by the advance of internet communication. In light of the Postal Service's seriously underfunded pension system, Congress should explore

a greater role for private enterprise in appropriate aspects of the mail-processing system.

**Protecting Travelers and their Rights:
Reforming the TSA for Security and Privacy**

While the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attacks brought about a greater need for homeland security, the American people have already delivered their verdict on the Transportation Security Administration: its procedures – and much of its personnel – need to be changed. It is now a massive bureaucracy of 65,000 employees who seem to be accountable to no one for the way they treat travelers. We call for the private sector to take over airport screening wherever feasible and look toward the development of security systems that can replace the personal violation of frisking.

The Rule of Law: Legal Immigration

The greatest asset of the American economy is the American worker. Just as immigrant labor helped build our country in the past, today's legal immigrants are making vital contributions in every aspect of our national life. Their industry and commitment to American values strengthens our economy, enriches our culture, and enables us to better understand and more effectively compete with the rest of the world. Illegal immigration undermines those benefits and affects U.S. workers. In an age of terrorism, drug cartels, human trafficking, and criminal gangs, the presence of millions of unidentified persons in this country poses grave risks to the safety and the sovereignty of the United States. Our highest priority, therefore, is to secure the rule of law both at our borders and at ports of entry.

We recognize that for most of those seeking entry into this country, the lack of respect for the rule of law in their homelands has meant economic exploitation and political oppression by corrupt elites. In this country, the rule of law guarantees equal treatment to every individual, including more than one million immigrants to whom we grant permanent residence every year. That is why we oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by intentionally violating the law, disadvantage those who have obeyed it. Granting amnesty only rewards and encourages more law breaking. We support the mandatory use

of the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (S.A.V.E.) program—an internet-based system that verifies the lawful presence of applicants—prior to the granting of any State or federal government entitlements or IRS refunds. We insist upon enforcement at the workplace through verification systems so that jobs can be available to all legal workers. Use of the E-verify program—an internet-based system that verifies the employment authorization and identity of employees—must be made mandatory nationwide. State enforcement efforts in the workplace must be welcomed, not attacked. When Americans need jobs, it is absolutely essential that we protect them from illegal labor in the workplace. In addition, it is why we demand tough penalties for those who practice identity theft, deal in fraudulent documents, and traffic in human beings. It is why we support Republican legislation to give the Department of Homeland Security long-term detention authority to keep dangerous but undepportable aliens off our streets, expedite expulsion of criminal aliens, and make gang membership a deportable offense.

The current Administration’s approach to immigration has undermined the rule of law at every turn. It has lessened work-site enforcement—and even allows the illegal aliens it does uncover to walk down the street to the next employer—and challenged legitimate State efforts to keep communities safe, suing them for trying to enforce the law when the federal government refuses to do so. It has created a backdoor amnesty program unrecognized in law, granting worker authorization to illegal aliens, and shown little regard for the life-and-death situations facing the men and women of the border patrol.

Perhaps worst of all, the current Administration has failed to enforce the legal means for workers or employers who want to operate within the law.

In contrast, a Republican Administration and Congress will partner with local governments through cooperative enforcement agreements in Section 287g of the Immigration and Nationality Act to

make communities safer for all and will consider, in light of both current needs and historic practice, the utility of a legal and reliable source of foreign labor where needed through a new guest worker program. We will create humane procedures to encourage illegal aliens to return home voluntarily, while enforcing the law against those who overstay their visas.

State efforts to reduce illegal immigration must be encouraged, not attacked. The pending Department of Justice lawsuits against Arizona, Alabama, South Carolina, and Utah must be dismissed immediately. The double-layered fencing on the border that was enacted by Congress in 2006, but never completed, must finally be built. In order to restore the rule of law, federal funding should be denied to sanctuary cities that violate federal law and endanger their own citizens, and federal funding should be denied to universities that provide in-state tuition rates to illegal aliens, in open defiance of federal law.

We are grateful to the thousands of new immigrants, many of them not yet citizens, who are serving in the Armed Forces. Their patriotism should encourage us all to embrace the newcomers legally among us, assist their journey to full citizenship, and help their communities avoid isolation from the mainstream of society. To that end, while we encourage the retention and transmission of heritage tongues, we support English as the nation’s official language, a unifying force essential for the educational and economic advancement of—not only immigrant communities—but also our nation as a whole.

Honoring Our Relationship with American Indians

Based on both treaty and other law, the federal government has a unique government-to-government relationship with and trust responsibility for Indian Tribal Governments and American Indians and Alaska Natives. These obligations have not been sufficiently honored. The social and economic problems that plague Indian country have grown worse over the last several decades; we must reverse that trend.

The greatest asset of the American economy is the American worker. Just as immigrant labor helped build our country in the past, today’s legal immigrants are making vital contributions in every aspect of our national life.

Ineffective federal programs deprive American Indians of the services they need, and long-term failures threaten to undermine tribal sovereignty itself.

American Indians have established elected tribal governments to carry out the public policies of the tribe, administer services to its tribal member constituents, and manage relations with federal, State, and local governments. We respect the tribal governments as the voice of their communities and encourage federal, State, and local governments to heed those voices in developing programs and partnerships to improve the quality of life for American Indians and their neighbors in their communities.

Republicans believe that economic self-sufficiency is the ultimate answer to the challenges confronting Indian country. We believe that tribal governments and their communities, not Washington bureaucracies, are best situated to craft solutions that will end systemic problems that create poverty and disenfranchisement. Just as the federal government should not burden States with regulations, it should not stifle the development of resources within the reservations, which need federal assistance to advance their commerce nationally through roads and technology. Federal and State regulations that thwart job creation must be withdrawn or redrawn so that tribal governments acting on behalf of American Indians are not disadvantaged. It is especially egregious that the Democratic Party has persistently undermined tribal sovereignty in order to provide advantage to union bosses in the tribal workplace.

Republicans recognize that each tribe has the right of consultation before any new regulatory policy is implemented on tribal land. To the extent possible, such consultation should take place in Indian country with the tribal government and its members. Before promulgating and imposing any new laws or regulations affecting trust land or members, the federal government should encourage Indian tribes to develop their own policies to achieve program objectives, and should defer to tribes to develop their own standards, or standards in conjunction with State governments.

Republicans reject a one-size-fits-all approach to federal-tribal-State partnerships and will work to expand local autonomy where tribal governments seek it. Better partnerships will help us to expand eco-

nomics opportunity, deliver top-flight education to future generations, modernize and improve the Indian Health Service to make it more responsive to local needs, and build essential infrastructure in Indian country in cooperation with tribal neighbors. Our approach is to empower American Indians, through tribal self-determination and self-governance policies, to develop their greatest assets, human resources and the rich natural resources on their lands, without undue federal interference.

Like all Americans, American Indians want safe communities for their families; but inadequate resources and neglect have, over time, allowed criminal activities to plague Indian country. To protect everyone—and especially the most vulnerable: children, women, and elders—the legal system in tribal communities must provide stability and protect property rights. Everyone’s due process and civil rights must be safeguarded.

We support efforts to ensure equitable participation in federal programs by American Indians, including Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians and to preserve their culture and languages that we consider to be national treasures. Lastly, we recognize that American Indians have responded to the call for military service in percentage numbers far greater than have other groups of Americans. We honor that commitment, loyalty, and sacrifice of all American Indians serving in the military today and in years past and will ensure that all veterans and their families receive the care and respect they have earned through their loyal service to America.

Preserving the District of Columbia

The nation’s capital city, a special responsibility of the federal government, belongs both to its residents and to all Americans, millions of whom visit it every year. Congressional Republicans have taken the lead in efforts to foster homeownership and open access to higher education for Washington residents. Against the opposition of the current President and leaders of the Democratic Party, they have fought to establish, and now to expand, the D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program, through which thousands of low-income children have been able to attend a school of their choice and receive a quality education.

D.C.'s Republicans have been in the forefront of exposing and combating the chronic corruption among the city's top Democratic officials. We join their call for a non-partisan elected Attorney General to clean up the city's political culture and for congressional action to enforce the spirit of the Home Rule Act assuring minority representation on the City Council. After decades of inept one-party rule, the city's structural deficit demands congressional attention.

As the center of our government, the District contains many potential targets for terrorist attacks. Federal security agencies should work closely with local officials and regional administrations like the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority. A top priority must be ensuring that all public transportation, especially Metro rails, is functioning in the event of an emergency evacuation. Also, to ensure protection of the fundamental right to keep and bear arms, we call on the governing authority to pass laws consistent with the Supreme Court's decisions in the *District of Columbia v. Heller* and *McDonald v. Chicago* cases, which upheld the fundamental right to keep and bear arms for self-defense.

We oppose statehood for the District of Columbia.

Modernizing the Federal Civil Service

The federal workforce bears great responsibilities and sometimes wields tremendous power, especially when Congress delegates to it the execution of complicated and far-reaching legislation. We recognize the dedication of federal workers and the difficulty of their thankless task of implementing poorly drafted or open-ended legislation.

Under the current Administration, the civil service has grown by at least 140,000 workers, while the number making at least \$150,000 has doubled. At a time when the national debt has increased to over \$15.9 trillion under the current Administration, this is grossly irresponsible. The American people work too hard and too long to support a bloated government. We call for a reduction, through attrition, in the federal payroll of at least 10 percent and the adjustment of pay scales and benefits to reflect those of the private sector. We must bring the 130-year old

Civil Service System into the twenty-first century. The federal pay system should be sufficiently flexible to acknowledge and reward those who dare to innovate, reduce overhead, optimize processes, and expedite paperwork.

Delinquency in paying taxes and repaying student loans has been too common in some segments of the civil service. A Republican Administration will make enforcement among its own employees a priority and, unlike the current Administration, will name to public office no one who has failed to meet their financial obligations to the government and fellow taxpayers.

America's Future in Space: Continuing this Quest

The exploration of space has been a key part of U.S. global leadership and has supported innovation and ownership of technology. Over the last half-century, in partnership with our aerospace industry, the work of NASA has helped define and strengthen our nation's technological prowess. From building the world's most powerful rockets to landing men on the Moon, sending robotic spacecraft throughout our solar system and beyond, building the International Space Station, and launching space-based telescopes that allow scientists to better understand our universe, NASA science and engineering have produced spectacular results. The technologies that emerged from those programs propelled our aerospace industrial base and directly benefit our national security, safety, economy, and quality of life. Through its achievements, NASA has inspired generations of Americans to study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, leading to careers that drive our country's technological and economic engines.

Today, America's leadership in space is challenged by countries eager to emulate—and surpass—NASA's accomplishments. To preserve our national security interests and foster innovation and competitiveness, we must sustain our preeminence in space, launching more science missions, guaranteeing unfettered access, and maintaining a source of high-value American jobs.

Honoring and Supporting Americans in the Territories

We honor the extraordinary sacrifices of the men and women of the territories who protect our freedom through their service in the U.S. Armed Forces. We welcome their greater participation in all aspects of the political process and affirm their right to seek the full extension of the Constitution, with all the rights and responsibilities it entails.

U.S. territories face serious economic challenges as they struggle to retain existing industries and develop new ones. Development of local energy options is crucial to reduce their dependence on imported fuel and promote economic stability. The Pacific territories should have flexibility to determine the minimum wage, which has seriously restricted progress in the

private sector. A stronger private sector can raise wages, reduce dependence on public sector employment, and lead toward local self-sufficiency. All unreasonable economic impediments must be removed, including unreasonable U.S. customs practices.

We support the right of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to be admitted to the Union as a fully sovereign state if they freely so determine. We recognize that Congress has the final authority to define the constitutionally valid options for Puerto Rico to achieve a permanent non-territorial status with government by consent and full enfranchisement. As long as Puerto Rico is not a State, however, the will of its people regarding their political status should be ascertained by means of a general right of referendum or specific referenda sponsored by the U.S. government.

Renewing American Values to Build Healthy Families, Great Schools and Safe Neighborhoods



We are the party of independent individuals and the institutions they create—families, schools, congregations, neighborhoods—to advance their ideals and make real their dreams. Foremost among those institutions is the American family. It is the foundation of our society and the first level of self-government. Its daily lessons—cooperation, patience, mutual respect, responsibility, self-reliance – are fundamental to the order and progress of our Republic. Government can never replace the family. That is why we insist that public policy, from taxation to education, from healthcare to welfare, be formulated with attention to the needs and strengths of the family.

Preserving and Protecting Traditional Marriage

The institution of marriage is the foundation of civil society. Its success as an institution will determine our success as a nation. It has been proven by both experience and endless social science studies that traditional marriage is best for children. Children raised in intact married families are more likely to attend college, are physically and emotionally healthier, are less likely to use drugs or alcohol, engage in crime, or get pregnant outside of marriage. The success of marriage directly impacts the economic well-being of individuals. Furthermore, the future of marriage affects freedom. The lack of family formation not only leads to more government costs, but also to more government control over the lives of its citizens in all aspects. We recognize and honor the courageous efforts of those who bear the many burdens of parenting alone, even as we believe that marriage, the union of one man and one woman must be upheld as the national standard, a goal to stand for, encourage, and promote through laws governing marriage. We embrace the principle that all Americans should be treated with respect and dignity.

Creating a Culture of Hope: Raising Families Beyond Poverty

The Republican-led welfare reforms enacted in 1996 marked a revolution in government’s approach to poverty. They changed the standard for policy success from the amount of income transferred to the poor to the number of poor who moved from welfare to economic independence. We took the belief of most Americans—that welfare should be a hand up, not a hand out—and made it law. Work requirements, though modest, were at the heart of this success. That is why so many are now outraged by the current Administration’s recent decision to permit waivers for work requirements for welfare benefits, in other words, to administratively repeal the most successful anti-poverty policy in memory. Instead of undermining the expectation that low-income parents and individuals should strive to support themselves, benefit programs like food stamps must ensure that those benefits are better targeted to those who need help the most.

For the sake of low-income families as well as the taxpayers, the federal government’s entire system of public assistance should be reformed to ensure that it promotes work. Each year, this system dispenses nearly \$1 trillion in taxpayer funds across a maze of approximately 80 programs that are neither coordinated nor effective in solving poverty and lifting up families. For many individuals collecting benefits from multiple categorical programs, efforts to work or earn more actually result in less money in their pocket through the resulting loss of benefits. This poverty trap would ensnare even more Americans if Obamacare were implemented. Taking a part time job, working an extra shift, or even just marrying someone who works, would result in a loss of benefits, thereby discouraging the very acts necessary to achieve the American Dream.

Adoption and Foster Care

Families formed or enlarged by adoption strengthen our communities and ennoble our nation. We applaud the Republican legislative initiatives that led to a significant increase in adoptions in recent years, and we call upon the private sector to consider the needs of adoptive families on a par with others. Any restructuring of the federal tax code should recognize the financial impact of the adoption process and the commitment made by adoptive families.

The nation's foster care system remains a necessary fallback for youngsters from troubled families. Because of reforms initiated by many States, the number of foster children has declined to just over 400,000. A major problem of the system is its lack of support, financial and otherwise, for teens who age out of foster care and into a world in which many are not prepared to go it alone. We urge States to work with the faith-based and other community groups which reach out to these young people in need.

Making the Internet Family-Friendly

Millions of Americans suffer from problem or pathological gambling that can destroy families. We support the prohibition of gambling over the Internet and call for reversal of the Justice Department's decision distorting the formerly accepted meaning of the Wire Act that could open the door to Internet betting.

The Internet must be made safe for children. We call on service providers to exercise due care to ensure that the Internet cannot become a safe haven for predators while respecting First Amendment rights. We congratulate the social networking sites that bar known sex offenders from participation. We urge active prosecution against child pornography, which is closely linked to the horrors of human trafficking. Current laws on all forms of pornography and obscenity need to be vigorously enforced.

Advancing Americans with Disabilities

We renew our commitment to the inclusion of Americans with disabilities in all aspects of our national life. In keeping with that commitment, we oppose the non-consensual withholding of care or treatment from people with disabilities, including newborns, as well as the elderly and infirm, just as

we oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide, which endanger especially those on the margins of society. Because government should set a positive standard in hiring and contracting for the services of persons with disabilities, we need to update the statutory authority for the Ability One program, a major avenue by which those productive members of our society can offer high quality services.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has opened up unprecedented opportunities for many students, and we reaffirm our support for its goal of minimizing the separation of children with disabilities from their peers. We urge preventive efforts in early childhood, especially assistance in gaining pre-reading skills, to help many students move beyond the need for IDEA's protections. We endorse the program of Employment First, developed by major disability rights groups, to replace dependency with jobs in the mainstream of the American workforce.

Repealing Obamacare

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act—Obamacare—was never really about healthcare, though its impact upon the nation's health is disastrous. From its start, it was about power, the expansion of government control over one sixth of our economy, and resulted in an attack on our Constitution, by requiring that U.S. citizens purchase health insurance. We agree with the four dissenting justices of the Supreme Court: "In our view the entire Act before us is invalid in its entirety." It was the high-water mark of an outdated liberalism, the latest attempt to impose upon Americans a euro-style bureaucracy to manage all aspects of their lives. Obamacare has been struck down in the court of public opinion and is falling by the weight of its own confusing, unworkable, budget-busting, and conflicting provisions. It would tremendously expand Medicaid without significant reform, leaving the States to assume unsustainable financial burdens. If fully implemented, it could not function; and Republican victories in the November elections will guarantee that it is never implemented. Congressional Republicans are committed to its repeal; and a Republican President, on the first day in office, will use his legitimate waiver authority under that law to halt its progress and then

will sign its repeal. Then the American people, through the free market, can advance affordable and responsible healthcare reform that meets the needs and concerns of patients and providers. Through Obamacare, the current Administration has promoted the notion of abortion as healthcare. We, however, affirm the dignity of women by protecting the sanctity of human life. Numerous studies have shown that abortion endangers the health and well-being of women, and we stand firmly against it.

Our Prescription for American Healthcare: Improve Quality and Lower Costs

We believe that taking care of one’s health is an individual responsibility. Chronic diseases, many of them related to lifestyle, drive healthcare costs, accounting for more than 75 percent of the nation’s medical spending. To reduce demand, and thereby lower costs, we must foster personal responsibility while increasing preventive services to promote healthy lifestyles. We believe that all Americans should have improved access to affordable, coordinated, quality healthcare, including individuals struggling with mental illness.

Our goal is to encourage the development of a healthcare system that provides higher quality care at a lower cost to all Americans while protecting the patient-physician relationship based on mutual trust, informed consent, and privileged patient confidentiality. We seek to increase healthcare choice and options, contain costs and reduce mandates, simplify the system for patients and providers, restore cuts made to Medicare, and equalize the tax treatment of group and individual health insurance plans. For most Americans, those who are insured now or who seek insurance in the future, our practical, non-intrusive reforms will promote flexibility in State leadership in healthcare reform, promote a free-market based system, and empower consumer choice. All of which will return direction of the nation’s healthcare to the people and away from the federal government.

To return the States to their proper role of regu-

lating local insurance markets and caring for the needy, we propose to block grant Medicaid and other payments to the States; limit federal requirements on both private insurance and Medicaid; assist all patients, including those with pre-existing conditions, through reinsurance and risk adjustment; and promote non-litigation alternatives for dispute resolution. We call on State officials to carefully consider the increased costs of medical mandates, imposed under their laws, which may price many low-income families out of the insurance market. We call on the government to permanently ban all federal funding and subsidies for abortion and healthcare plans that include abortion coverage.

To achieve a free market in healthcare and ensure competition, we will promote price transparency so that consumers will know the actual cost of treatments before they undergo them. When patients are aware of costs, they are less likely to over-utilize services. We support legislation to cap non-economic damages in medical malpractice lawsuits, thereby relieving conscientious providers of burdens that are not rightly theirs and addressing a serious cause of escalating medical bills. We will empower individuals and small businesses to form purchasing pools in order to expand coverage to the uninsured. Individuals with pre-existing conditions who maintain continuous insurance coverage should be protected from discrimination. We support technology enhancements for medical health records and data systems while affirming patient privacy and ownership of health information.

Ensuring Consumer Choice in Healthcare

Consumer choice is the most powerful factor in healthcare reform. Today’s highly mobile work force requires portability of insurance coverage that can go with them from job to job. The need to maintain coverage should not dictate where families have to live and work. Putting the patient at the center of policy decisions will increase choice and reduce costs while

Consumer choice is the most powerful factor in healthcare reform. . . . Putting the patient at the center of policy decisions will increase choice and reduce costs while ensuring that services provide what Americans actually want.

ensuring that services provide what Americans actually want. We must end tax discrimination against the individual purchase of insurance and allow consumers to purchase insurance across State lines. While promoting “co-insurance” products and alternatives to “fee for service,” government must promote Health Savings Accounts and Health Reimbursement Accounts to be used for insurance premiums and should encourage the private sector to rate competing insurance plans. We will ensure that America’s aging population has access to safe and affordable care. Because seniors overwhelmingly desire to age at home, we will make home care a priority in public policy. We will champion the right of individual choice in senior care. We will aggressively implement programs to protect against elder abuse, and we will work to ensure that quality care is provided across the care continuum from home to nursing home to hospice.

Supporting Federal Healthcare Research and Development

We support federal investment in healthcare delivery systems and solutions creating innovative means to provide greater, more cost-effective access to high quality healthcare. We also support federal investment in basic and applied biomedical research, especially the neuroscience research that may hold great potential for dealing with diseases and disorders such as Autism, Alzheimer’s, and Parkinson’s. If we are to make significant headway against breast and prostate cancer, diabetes, and other killers, research must consider the special needs of formerly neglected groups. We call for expanded support for the stem-cell research that now offers the greatest hope for many afflictions—with adult stem cells, umbilical cord blood, and cells reprogrammed into pluripotent stem cells—without the destruction of embryonic human life. We urge a ban on human cloning and on the creation of or experimentation on human embryos. We support restoring the Drug Enforcement Administration ban on the use of controlled substances for physician-assisted suicide. We oppose the FDA approval of Mifeprex, formerly known as RU-486, and similar drugs that terminate innocent human life after conception.

Protecting Individual Conscience in Healthcare

No healthcare professional or organization should ever be required to perform, provide for, withhold, or refer for a medical service against their conscience. This is especially true of the religious organizations which deliver a major portion of America’s healthcare, a service rooted in the charity of faith communities. We do not believe, however, that healthcare providers should be allowed to withhold services because the healthcare provider believes the patient’s life is not worth living. We support the ability of all organizations to provide, purchase, or enroll in healthcare coverage consistent with their religious, moral or ethical convictions without discrimination or penalty. We likewise support the right of parents to consent to medical treatment for their children, including mental health treatment, drug treatment, and treatment involving pregnancy, contraceptives and abortion. We urge enactment of pending legislation that would require parental consent to transport girls across state lines for abortions.

Reforming the FDA

America’s leadership in life sciences R&D and medical innovation is being threatened. As a country, we must work together now or lose our leadership position in medical innovation, U.S. job creation, and access to life-saving treatments for U.S. patients. The United States has led the global medical device and pharmaceutical industries for decades. This leadership has made the U.S. the medical innovation capital of the world, bringing millions of high-paying jobs to our country and life-saving devices and drugs to our nation’s patients. But that leadership position is at risk; patients, innovators, and job creators point to the lack of predictability, consistency, transparency and efficiency at the Food and Drug Administration that is driving innovation overseas, benefiting foreign, not U.S., patients.

We pledge to reform the FDA so we can ensure that the U.S. remains the world leader in medical innovation, that device and drug jobs stay in the U.S., that U.S. patients benefit first from new devices and drugs, and that the FDA no longer wastes U.S. taxpayer and innovators’ resources because of bureaucratic red tape and legal uncertainty.

Reducing Costs through Tort Reform

Frivolous medical malpractice lawsuits have ballooned the cost of healthcare for the average American. Physicians are increasingly practicing defensive medicine because of the looming threat of malpractice liability. Moreover, some medical practitioners are avoiding patients with complex and high-risk medical problems because of the high costs of medical malpractice lawsuits. Rural America is hurt especially hard as obstetricians, surgeons, and other healthcare providers are moving to urban settings or retiring, causing a significant healthcare workforce shortage and subsequently decreasing access to care for all patients. We are committed to aggressively pursuing tort reform legislation to help avoid the practice of defensive medicine, to keep healthcare costs low, and improve healthcare quality.

Education: A Chance for Every Child

Parents are responsible for the education of their children. We do not believe in a one size fits all approach to education and support providing broad education choices to parents and children at the State and local level. Maintaining American preeminence requires a world-class system of education, with high standards, in which all students can reach their potential. Today's education reform movement calls for accountability at every stage of schooling. It affirms higher expectations for all students and rejects the crippling bigotry of low expectations. It recognizes the wisdom of State and local control of our schools, and it wisely sees consumer rights in education—choice—as the most important driving force for renewing our schools.

Education is much more than schooling. It is the whole range of activities by which families and communities transmit to a younger generation, not just knowledge and skills, but ethical and behavioral norms and traditions. It is the handing over of a personal and cultural identity. That is why education choice has expanded so vigorously. It is also why American education has, for the last several decades, been the focus of constant controversy, as centralizing forces outside the family and community have sought to remake education in order to remake America. They have not succeeded, but they have done immense damage.

Attaining Academic Excellence for All

Since 1965 the federal government has spent \$2 trillion on elementary and secondary education with no substantial improvement in academic achievement or high school graduation rates (which currently are 59 percent for African-American students and 63 percent for Hispanics). The U.S. spends an average of more than \$10,000 per pupil per year in public schools, for a total of more than \$550 billion. That represents more than 4 percent of GDP devoted to K-12 education in 2010. Of that amount, federal spending was more than \$47 billion. Clearly, if money were the solution, our schools would be problem-free.

More money alone does not necessarily equal better performance. After years of trial and error, we know what does work, what has actually made a difference in student advancement, and what is powering education reform at the local level all across America: accountability on the part of administrators, parents and teachers; higher academic standards; programs that support the development of character and financial literacy; periodic rigorous assessments on the fundamentals, especially math, science, reading, history, and geography; renewed focus on the Constitution and the writings of the Founding Fathers, and an accurate account of American history that celebrates the birth of this great nation; transparency, so parents and the public can discover which schools best serve their pupils; flexibility and freedom to innovate, so schools can adapt to the special needs of their students and hold teachers and administrators responsible for student performance. We support the innovations in education reform occurring at the State level based upon proven results. Republican Governors have led in the effort to reform our country's underperforming education system, and we applaud these advancements.

We advocate the policies and methods that have proven effective: building on the basics, especially STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and math) and phonics; ending social promotions; merit pay for good teachers; classroom discipline; parental involvement; and strong leadership by principals, superintendents, and locally elected school boards. Because technology has become an essential tool of learning, proper implementation of technol-

ogy is a key factor in providing every child equal access and opportunity.

Consumer Choice in Education

The Republican Party is the party of fresh and innovative ideas in education. We support options for learning, including home schooling and local innovations like single-sex classes, full-day school hours, and year-round schools. School choice—whether through charter schools, open enrollment requests, college lab schools, virtual schools, career and technical education programs, vouchers, or tax credits—is important for all children, especially for families with children trapped in failing schools. Getting those youngsters into decent learning environments and helping them to realize their full potential is the greatest civil rights challenge of our time. We support the promotion of local career and technical educational programs and entrepreneurial programs that have been supported by leaders in industry and will retrain and retool the American workforce, which is the best in the world. A young person’s ability to achieve in school must be based on his or her God-given talent and motivation, not an address, zip code, or economic status.

In sum, on the one hand enormous amounts of money are being spent for K-12 public education with overall results that do not justify that spending. On the other hand, the common experience of families, teachers, and administrators forms the basis of what does work in education. We believe the gap between those two realities can be successfully bridged, and Congressional Republicans are pointing a new way forward with major reform legislation. We support its concept of block grants and the repeal of numerous federal regulations which interfere with State and local control of public schools.

The bulk of the federal money through Title I for low-income children and through IDEA for disabled youngsters should follow the students to whatever school they choose so that eligible pupils, through open enrollment, can bring their share of the funding with them. The Republican-founded D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program should be expanded as a model for the rest of the country. We deplore the efforts by Congressional Democrats and the current President to kill this successful program for disadvantaged students in order to placate the leaders of

the teachers’ unions. We support putting the needs of students before the special interests of unions when approaching elementary and secondary education reform.

Because parents are a child’s first teachers, we support family literacy programs, which improve the reading, language, and life skills of both parents and children from low-income families. To ensure that all students have access to the mainstream of American life, we support the English First approach and oppose divisive programs that limit students’ ability to advance in American society. We renew our call for replacing “family planning” programs for teens with abstinence education which teaches abstinence until marriage as the responsible and respected standard of behavior. Abstinence from sexual activity is the only protection that is 100 percent effective against out-of-wedlock pregnancies and sexually-transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS when transmitted sexually. It is effective, science-based, and empowers teens to achieve optimal health outcomes and avoid risks of sexual activity. We oppose school-based clinics that provide referrals, counseling, and related services for abortion and contraception. We support keeping federal funds from being used in mandatory or universal mental health, psychiatric, or socio-emotional screening programs.

We applaud America’s great teachers, who should be protected against frivolous litigation and should be able to take reasonable actions to maintain discipline and order in the classroom. We support legislation that will correct the current law provision which defines a “Highly Qualified Teacher” merely by his or her credentials, not results in the classroom. We urge school districts to make use of teaching talent in business, STEM fields, and in the military, especially among our returning veterans. Rigid tenure systems based on the “last in, first out” policy should be replaced with a merit-based approach that can attract fresh talent and dedication to the classroom. All personnel who interact with school children should pass background checks and be held to the highest standards of personal conduct.

Improving Our Nation’s Classrooms

Higher education faces its own challenges, many of which stem from the poor preparation of students

before they reach college. One consequence has been the multiplying number of remedial courses for freshmen. Even so, our universities, large and small, public or private, form the world's greatest assemblage of learning. They drive much of the research that keeps America competitive and, by admitting large numbers of foreign students, convey our values and culture to the world.

Ideological bias is deeply entrenched within the current university system. Whatever the solution in private institutions may be, in State institutions the trustees have a responsibility to the public to ensure that their enormous investment is not abused for political indoctrination. We call on State officials to ensure that our public colleges and universities be places of learning and the exchange of ideas, not zones of intellectual intolerance favoring the Left.

Addressing Rising College Costs

College costs, however, are on an unsustainable trajectory, rising year by year far ahead of overall inflation. Nationwide, student loan debt now exceeds credit card debt, roughly \$23,300 for each of the 35,000,000 debtors, taking years to pay off. Over 50 percent of recent college grads are unemployed or underemployed, working at jobs for which their expensive educations gave them no training. It is time to get back to basics and to higher education programs directly related to job opportunities.

The first step is to acknowledge the need for change when the status quo is not working. New systems of learning are needed to compete with traditional four-year colleges: expanded community colleges and technical institutions, private training schools, online universities, life-long learning, and work-based learning in the private sector. New models for acquiring advanced skills will be ever more important in the rapidly changing economy of the twenty-first century, especially in science, technology, engineering, and math. Public policy should advance the affordability, innovation, and transparency needed to address all these challenges and to make accessible to everyone the emerging alternatives, with their lower cost degrees, to traditional college attendance.

Federal student aid is on an unsustainable path, and efforts should be taken to provide families with

greater transparency and the information they need to make prudent choices about a student's future: completion rates, repayment rates, future earnings, and other factors that may affect their decisions. The federal government should not be in the business of originating student loans; however, it should serve as an insurance guarantor for the private sector as they offer loans to students. Private sector participation in student financing should be welcomed. Any regulation that drives tuition costs higher must be reevaluated to balance its worth against its negative impact on students and their parents.

Justice for All: Safe Neighborhoods and Prison Reform

The most effective forces in reducing crime and other social ills are strong families and caring communities supported by excellent law enforcement. Both reinforce constructive conduct and ethical standards by setting examples and providing safe havens from dangerous and destructive behaviors. But even under the best social circumstances, strong, well-trained law enforcement is necessary to protect us all, and especially the weak and vulnerable, from predators. Our national experience over the last several decades has shown that citizen vigilance, tough but fair prosecutors, meaningful sentences, protection of victims' rights, and limits on judicial discretion can preserve public safety by keeping criminals off the streets.

Liberals do not understand this simple axiom: criminals behind bars cannot harm the general public. To that end, we support mandatory prison sentencing for gang crimes, violent or sexual offenses against children, repeat drug dealers, rape, robbery and murder. We support a national registry for convicted child murderers. We oppose parole for dangerous or repeat felons. Courts should have the option of imposing the death penalty in capital murder cases.

In solidarity with those who protect us, we call for mandatory prison time for all assaults involving serious injury to law enforcement officers. Criminals injured in the course of their crimes should not be able to seek monetary damages from their intended victims or from the public.

While getting criminals off the street is essential,

more attention must be paid to the process of restoring those individuals to the community. Prisons should do more than punish; they should attempt to rehabilitate and institute proven prisoner reentry systems to reduce recidivism and future victimization. We endorse State and local initiatives that are trying new approaches, often called accountability courts.

Government at all levels should work with faith-based institutions that have proven track records in diverting young and first time, non-violent offenders from criminal careers, for which we salute them. Their emphasis on restorative justice, to make the victim whole and put the offender on the right path, can give law enforcement the flexibility it needs in dealing with different levels of criminal behavior. We endorse State and local initiatives that are trying new approaches to curbing drug abuse and diverting first-time offenders to rehabilitation.

Public authorities must regain control of their correctional institutions, for we cannot allow prisons to become ethnic or racial battlegrounds. Persons jailed for whatever cause should be protected against cruel or degrading treatment by other inmates. In some cases, the institution of family-friendly policies may curtail prison violence and reduce the rate of recidivism, thus reducing the enormous fiscal and social costs of incarceration. Breaking the cycle of crime begins with the children of those who are prisoners. Deprived of a parent through no fault of their own, these youngsters should be a special concern of our schools, social services, and religious institutions.

Thirty years ago, President Reagan's Task Force on Victims of Crime, calling the neglect of crime victims a "national disgrace," proposed a Constitutional amendment to secure their formal rights. While some progress has been made to rectify that situation, the need for national action still persists in the unacceptable treatment of innocent victims. We call on the States to make it a bipartisan priority to protect the rights of crime victims, who should also be assured of access to social and legal services; and we call on the Congress to make the federal courts a model in this regard for the rest of the country.

The resources of the federal government's law enforcement and judicial systems have been strained by two unfortunate expansions: the over-criminalization of behavior and the over-federalization of offenses. The number of criminal offenses in the U.S. Code increased from 3,000 in the early 1980s to over 4,450 by 2008. Federal criminal law should focus on acts by federal employees or acts committed on federal property – and leave the rest to the States. Then Congress should withdraw from federal departments and agencies the power to criminalize behavior, a practice which, according to the Congressional Research Service, has created "tens of thousands" of criminal offenses. No one other than an elected representative should have the authority to define a criminal act and set criminal penalties. In the same way, Congress should reconsider the extent to which it has federalized offenses traditionally handled on the State or local level.

American Exceptionalism



We are the party of peace through strength. Professing American exceptionalism—the conviction that our country holds a unique place and role in human history—we proudly associate ourselves with those Americans of all political stripes who, more than three decades ago in a world as dangerous as today’s, came together to advance the cause of freedom. Repudiating the folly of an amateur foreign policy and defying a worldwide Marxist advance, they announced their strategy in the timeless slogan we repeat today: peace through strength—an enduring peace based on freedom and the will to defend it, and American democratic values and the will to promote them. While the twentieth century was undeniably an American century—with strong leadership, adherence to the principles of freedom and democracy our Founders’ enshrined in our nation’s Declaration of Independence and Constitution, and a continued reliance on Divine Providence—the twenty-first century will be one of American greatness as well.

Today’s adversaries are different, as are their weapons and their ideology, but this remains the same: the unity of Americans, beyond party, in gratitude to those who have defended our country, pursued its attackers to the ends of the earth, and today stand vigilant guard in our cities, on our coasts, and in alien lands. We pledge to our servicemen and women the authority and resources they need to protect the nation and defend America’s freedom. Continued vigilance, especially in travel and commerce, is necessary to prevent bioterrorism, cyber terrorism, and other asymmetric or non-traditional warfare attacks and to ensure that the horror of September 11, 2001 is never repeated on our soil.

Our country and its way of life have enemies both abroad and within our shores. We affirm the need for our military to protect the nation by finding and capturing our enemies and the necessity for the President to have the tools to deal with these threats. As history has sadly shown, even our fellow citizens may rarely become enemies of their country. Never-

theless, our government must continue to ensure the protections under our Constitution to all citizens, particularly the rights of habeas corpus and due process of law.

History proves that the best way to promote peace and prevent costly wars is to ensure that we constantly renew America’s economic strength. A healthy American economy is what underwrites and sustains American power. The current Administration is weakening America at home through anemic growth, high unemployment, and record-setting debt. We must therefore rebuild our economy and solve our fiscal crisis. In an American century, America will have the strongest economy and the strongest military in the world.

The Current Administration’s Failure: Leading From Behind

The Republican Party is the advocate for a strong national defense as the pathway to peace, economic prosperity, and the protection of those yearning to be free. Since the end of World War II, American military superiority has been the cornerstone of a strategy that seeks to deter aggression or defeat those who threaten our national security interests. In 1981, President Reagan came to office with an agenda of strong American leadership, beginning with a restoration of our country’s military strength. The rest is history, written in the rubble of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain.

We face a similar challenge today. The current Administration has responded with weakness to some of the gravest threats to our national security this country has faced, including the proliferation of transnational terrorism, continued belligerence by a nuclear-armed North Korea, an Iran in pursuit of nuclear weapons, rising Chinese hegemony in the Asia Pacific region, Russian activism, and threats from cyber espionage and terrorism. In response to these growing threats, President Obama has reduced the defense budget by over \$487 billion over the next

decade and fought Republican efforts to avoid another \$500 billion in automatic budget cuts through a sequestration in early 2013 that will take a meat ax to all major defense programs.

The Dangers of A Hollow Force: The Looming Sequestration

Sequestration—which is severe, automatic, across-the-board cuts in defense spending over the next decade—of the nation’s military budget would be a disaster for national security, imperiling the safety of our servicemen and women, accelerating the decline of our nation’s defense industrial base, and resulting in the layoff of more than 1 million skilled workers. Opposition to sequester is bipartisan; even the current Secretary of Defense has said the cuts will be “devastating” to America’s military. Yet the current President supported sequestration, signed it into law, and has threatened to veto Republican efforts to prevent it. If he allows an additional half trillion dollars to be cut from the defense budget, America will be left with the smallest ground force since 1940, the smallest number of ships since 1915, and the smallest Air Force in its history—at a time when our Nation faces a growing range of threats to our national security and a struggling economy that can ill afford to lose 1.5 million defense-related jobs.

Leaks for Political Purposes

The current Administration’s leaks of classified information have imperiled intelligence assets which are vital to American security. This conduct is contemptible. It betrays our national interest. It compromises our men and women in the field. And it demands a full and prompt investigation by a special counsel. Equally threatening to the long-term strength and safety of our Armed Forces are the current Administration’s efforts to sacrifice our national security for political gain and a partisan agenda. We give the current President credit for maintaining his predecessor’s quiet determination and planning to bring to justice the man behind the 9/11 attack on America, but he has tolerated publicizing the details of the operation to kill the leader of Al Qaeda; those leaks exposed the tactics and techniques of our Special Operations forces and denied our nation an unprecedented intelligence opportunity. Subsequent

leaks by senior Administration officials regarding cyber warfare, the use of drones against Al Qaeda and its operatives, and the targeting of our enemies—unprecedented leaks that compromised key sources and methods and damaged our national security—served the single purpose of propping up the image of a weak President.

A Failed National Security Strategy

The current Administration’s most recent National Security Strategy reflects the extreme elements in its liberal domestic coalition. It is a budget-constrained blueprint that, if fully implemented, will diminish the capabilities of our Armed Forces. The strategy significantly increases the risk of future conflict by declaring to our adversaries that we will no longer maintain the forces necessary to fight and win more than one conflict at a time. It relies on the good intentions and capabilities of international organizations to justify constraining American military readiness. Finally, the strategy subordinates our national security interests to environmental, energy, and international health issues, and elevates “climate change” to the level of a “severe threat” equivalent to foreign aggression. The word “climate,” in fact, appears in the current President’s strategy more often than Al Qaeda, nuclear proliferation, radical Islam, or weapons of mass destruction. The phrase “global war on terror” does not appear at all, and has been purposely avoided and changed by his Administration to “overseas contingency operations.”

Conventional Forces in Decline

More than a century ago, Republican President Theodore Roosevelt predicted that America’s future was in the Pacific. That future is here today, but it can develop peacefully only under the shield of American Naval and Air power. Yet the current Administration plans to significantly curtail production of our most advanced combat aircraft, decommission 6 of 60 Air Force tactical squadrons, and eliminate critical air mobility assets, including 27 giant C-5As and 65 C-130s, while divesting the nation of the brand new C-27.

The President plans to reduce our naval forces by retiring seven cruisers and slowing work on amphibious ships and attack submarines, further reducing the Navy that already has the smallest fleet since

the early years of the twentieth century. And he will reduce ground forces by separating 100,000 soldiers and Marines—many of whom will be discharged after recently returning from combat—and another 100,000 under the sequester.

These plans limit our strategic flexibility in an increasingly dangerous world. The current President is repeating the disastrous cuts of the post-Vietnam war era, putting our nation in danger of returning to the “hollow force” of the Carter Administration, when the U.S. military was not respected in the world.

Nuclear Forces and Missile Defense Imperiled

We recognize that the gravest terror threat we face—a nuclear attack made possible by nuclear proliferation—requires a comprehensive strategy for reducing the world’s nuclear stockpiles and preventing the spread of those armaments. But the U.S. can lead that effort only if it maintains an effective strategic arsenal at a level sufficient to fulfill its deterrent purposes, a notable failure of the current Administration.

The United States is the only nuclear power not modernizing its nuclear stockpile. It took the current Administration just one year to renege on the President’s commitment to modernize the neglected infrastructure of the nuclear weapons complex—a commitment made in exchange for approval of the New START treaty. In tandem with this, the current Administration has systematically undermined America’s missile defense, abandoning the missile defense bases in Poland and the Czech Republic, reducing the number of planned interceptors in Alaska, and cutting the budget for missile defense. In an embarrassing open microphone discussion with former Russian President Medvedev, the current President made clear that, if he wins a second term, he intends to exercise “more flexibility” to appease Russia, which means further undermining our missile defense capabilities. A Republican President will be honest and forthright with the American people about his policies and plans and not whisper promises to authoritarian leaders.

A strong and effective strategic arsenal is still necessary as a deterrent against competitors like Russia or China. But the danger in this age of asymmetric or non-traditional warfare comes from other

quarters as well. With unstable regimes in Iran and North Korea determined to develop nuclear-tipped missiles capable of reaching the United States, with the possibility that a terrorist group could gain control of a nuclear weapon, it is folly to abandon a missile shield for the country.

A Twenty-First Century Threat: The Cybersecurity Danger

The frequency, sophistication, and intensity of cyber-related incidents within the United States have increased steadily over the past decade and will continue to do so until it is made clear that a cyber attack against the United States will not be tolerated. The current Administration’s cyber security policies have failed to curb malicious actions by our adversaries, and no wonder, for there is no active deterrence protocol. The current deterrence framework is overly reliant on the development of defensive capabilities and has been unsuccessful in dissuading cyber-related aggression. The U.S. cannot afford to risk the cyber-equivalent of Pearl Harbor.

The government and private sector must work together to address the cyberthreats posed to the United States, help the free flow of information between network managers, and encourage innovation and investment in cybersecurity. The government must do a better job of protecting its own systems, which contain some of the most sensitive data and control some of our most important facilities. As such, we encourage an immediate update of the law that was drafted a decade ago to improve the security of government information systems. Additionally, we must invest in continuing research to develop cutting-edge cybersecurity technologies to protect the U.S. However, we acknowledge that the most effective way of combating potential cybersecurity threats is sharing cyberthreat information between the government and industry, as well as protecting the free flow of information within the private sector.

The current Administration’s laws and policies undermine what should be a collaborative relationship and put both the government and private entities at a severe disadvantage in proactively identifying potential cyberthreats. The costly and heavy-handed regulatory approach by the current

Administration will increase the size and cost of the federal bureaucracy and harm innovation in cybersecurity. The government collects valuable information about potential threats that can and should be shared with private entities without compromising national security. We believe that companies should be free from legal and regulatory barriers that prevent or deter them from voluntarily sharing cyberthreat information with their government partners.

An America That Leads: The Republican National Security Strategy for the Future

We will honor President Reagan's legacy of peace through strength by advancing the most cost-effective programs and policies crucial to our national security, including our economic security and fiscal solvency. To do that, we must honestly assess the threats facing this country, and we must be able to articulate candidly to the American people our priorities for the use of taxpayer dollars to address those threats.

We must deter any adversary who would attack us or use terror as a tool of government. Every potential enemy must have no doubt that our capabilities, our commitment, and our will to defeat them are clear, unwavering, and unequivocal. We must immediately employ a new blueprint for a National Military Strategy that is based on an informed and validated assessment of the potential threats we face, one that restores as a principal objective the deterrence using the full spectrum of our military capabilities. As Ronald Reagan proved by the victorious conclusion of the Cold War, only our capability to wield overwhelming military power can truly deter the enemies of the United States from threatening our people and our national interests.

In order to deter aggression from nation-states, we must maintain military and technical superiority through innovation while upgrading legacy systems including aircraft and armored vehicles. We must deter the threat posed by rogue aggressors with the assurance that justice will be served through state-of-the-art surveillance, enhanced special operations capabilities, and unmanned aerial systems.

We will employ the full range of military and intelligence options to defeat Al Qaeda and its affiliates who threaten not just the West but the

community of nations. We will have a comprehensive and just detainee policy that treats those who would attack our nation as enemy combatants. We will accept no arms control agreement that limits our right to self-defense; and we will fully deploy a missile defense shield for the people of the United States and for our allies.

We will pursue an effective cybersecurity strategy, supported by the necessary resources, that recognizes the importance of offensive capabilities. Whether it is a nation-state actively probing our national security networks, a terror organization seeking to obtain destructive cyber capabilities, or a criminal network's theft of intellectual property, more must be done to deter, defeat, and respond to cyberthreats.

We will restore the morale and advance the capabilities of our intelligence community to ensure that the President and our military leaders are fully informed in an uncertain and increasingly dangerous world. We will restore accountability to ensure that our nation's most sensitive information and activities are protected appropriately.

The Department of Defense, like all government agencies, needs to be careful to spend taxpayers' dollars wisely. We will implement sound management policies to ensure the timely, cost-effective delivery of the tools our troops need to fight. We reject Congressional earmarks that put personal and parochial interests ahead of military effectiveness and the best interests of the nation. We recognize the need for, and value of, competition within a robust industrial base to most effectively maximize quality and drive down costs in everything the Department buys.

Supporting our Troops, Standing By Our Heroes

The foundation of our military lies in the men and women who wear our country's uniform, whether on active duty or in the Reserves and National Guard, and the families who support them. Under no circumstances will we reveal any secret or detail of a military operation that could put our people into additional harm's way. The members of our military should be treated with the utmost respect and dignity. We reject the use of the military as a platform for social experimentation and will not

accept attempts to undermine military priorities and mission readiness.

Consistent with this commitment, we believe compensation and conditions for our Armed Forces in place at the time military service is initiated should be sufficient to attract and retain quality men and women as we honor our promises and commitments to veterans, retirees, and their families. These shall continue and not be reduced or otherwise diminished while in service, or upon separation, or retirement. The combat readiness of our Armed Forces is the foundation of strength and deterrence. Readiness requires a consistent and sustained investment in the training and re-equipping of our military personnel. We will never assume the risk of reduced readiness, and we can never return to the “hollow” forces of the 1970s. Combat readiness also requires that we reserve troops for truly necessary operations by not overextending them around the world.

We recognize that drastic cuts to our military’s end strength pose severe national security challenges. To avoid the overextension of our forces, we support a larger active force and oppose cuts to the National Guard and Reserves.

The all-volunteer force, begun on the watch of Republican Presidents, has carried America to victory from the Caribbean and Central America to the Balkans and Southwest Asia. We oppose the reinstatement of the draft whether directly or through compulsory national service. We support the advancement of women in the military, which has not only opened doors of opportunity for individuals but has also made possible the devoted, and often heroic, services of additional members of every branch of the Armed Forces. We support military women’s exemption from direct ground combat units and infantry battalions. We affirm the cultural values that encourage selfless service and superiority in battle, and we oppose anything which might divide or weaken team cohesion, including intra-military special interest demonstrations. We will support an objective and open-minded review of the current Administration’s management of military personnel policies and will correct problems with appropriate administrative, legal, or legislative action.

The National Guard and Reserves are a fully operational and battle-tested component of our Armed

Forces. Many of them have heroically served for multiple deployments resulting in inadequate time between deployments, also known as dwell time. We pledge to maintain their manpower and equipment strength and to ensure their members receive the pay, benefits, and adequate training to continue their service and maintain mission readiness through Presidential leadership and Congressional budget support. Their historic and continuing role as citizen-soldiers is a proud tradition linking every community across America to the cause of freedom. We affirm service members’ legal right to return to their civilian jobs, whether in government or the private sector, and we urge greater transition assistance to and from employers as they return to the civilian world. Especially in light of the high unemployment rates faced by younger Reserve and Guard members, we salute those employers who have wisely decided that it is a smart and patriotic business decision to hire those who have served above and beyond the call of duty.

The spiritual welfare of our troops and retired service members should be a priority of our national leadership. With military suicides running at the rate of one a day, with post-service medical conditions, including addiction and mental illness, and with the financial stress and homelessness that is often related to these factors, there is an urgent need for the kind of counseling that faith-based institutions can best provide. We support rights of conscience and religious freedom for military chaplains and people of faith. A Republican Commander in Chief will protect religious independence of military chaplains and will not tolerate attempts to ban Bibles or religious symbols from military facilities. We will enforce and defend in court the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in the Armed Forces as well as in the civilian world.

We call upon the entire chain of command—from the President and the Secretary of Defense, to base and unit commanders—to ensure that our troops and retired service members, wherever stationed, have the opportunity to vote in the November elections, and that their ballots will be returned in time to be properly counted. Those who fight for and defend freedom around the world must not be disenfranchised.

Recognizing and Supporting Military Families

The families of our military personnel currently serving, retired service members, and veterans must also be assured of the pay, health care, housing, education, and overall support they have earned. We will ensure that the federal government keeps its commitments to those who signed on the dotted line of enlistment with the assurance that those promises would be kept. We must also do more to retain the services of those service members who have borne the fight since 2001.

We must acknowledge that as our troops have experienced repeated deployments, so have their families. We are committed to providing programs that offer readjustment information and counseling to our military families, and urge States to offer support for job programs, license reciprocity, one-stop service centers, and education programs to support these families. The nation must also recognize the ultimate sacrifice of survivors and protect their benefits. We will work to protect service members and their families by not overextending their deployments.

Honoring and Supporting Our Veterans: A Sacred Obligation

America has a sacred trust with our veterans, and we are committed to providing them and their families with care and dignity. This is particularly true because our nation's warriors are volunteers, who served from a sense of duty. The work of the Department of Veterans Affairs—with a staff of 300,000—is essential to meet our obligations to them: providing health, education, disability, survivor, and home loan benefit services and arranging memorial services upon death. All its branches in those various fields must be made more responsive, moving from an adversarial to an advocacy relationship with veterans. To that end we will consider a fundamental change in structure to make the

regional directors of the Department presidential appointees rather than careerists.

Our wounded warriors, whether still in service or discharged, deserve the best medical care our country can provide. The nature of the fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan has resulted in an unprecedented incidence of traumatic brain injury, loss of limbs, and post-traumatic stress disorder which calls for a new commitment of resources and personnel for its treatment and care to promote recovery. We must make military and veterans' medicine the gold standard for mental health care, advances in prosthetics, and treatment of trauma and eye injuries. We must heed Abraham Lincoln's command "to care for him who bore the battle." To care, as well, for the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, who must be assured of meaningful financial assistance, remains our solemn duty.

Because the conditions of warfare have changed dramatically since the war on terror began, today's veterans face new challenges. Asymmetrical or non-traditional warfare results in a high incidence of severe conditions that must receive high priority and call for continued research into prevention and treatment.

We are committed to ending homelessness for our veterans. One key is to assist their reentry into the job market as soon as possible after military service ends. A job for a veteran is more than a source of income. It is a new mission, with a new status, and the transition can be difficult. It is a national scandal that veterans are one of the groups with the highest unemployment rates. We urge the private sector to make hiring vets a company policy and commend the many organizations that have specific programs to accomplish this. But the federal government must take the lead by simplifying the paper work required for a tax break for hiring a veteran and by giving vets their assured place at the head of the training and employment line.

Every State has an office dealing with veterans. The federal Department needs to consider these as

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partners in assisting vets, recognizing that those closest to the individual can best diagnose a problem and apply a remedy. This is especially important with regard to the determination of veterans' disability claims. If private insurance companies can deal with car wrecks and hurricanes within weeks or months, it is inexplicable that the federal government takes, on average, a year to process a veteran's claim. We urge immediate action to review the automatic denial of gun ownership to returning members of our Armed Forces who have had representatives appointed to manage their financial affairs.

Sovereign American Leadership in International Organizations

Since the end of World War II, the United States, through the founding of the United Nations and NATO, has participated in a wide range of international organizations which can, but sometimes do not, serve the cause of peace and prosperity. While acting through them, our country must always reserve the right to go its own way. There can be no substitute for principled American leadership.

The United Nations remains in dire need of reform, starting with full transparency in the financial operations of its overpaid bureaucrats. As long as its scandal-ridden management continues, as long as some of the world's worst tyrants hold seats on its Human Rights Council, and as long as Israel is treated as a pariah state, the U.N. cannot expect the full support of the American people.

The United Nations Population Fund has a shameful record of collaboration with China's program of compulsory abortion. We affirm the Republican Party's long-held position known as the Mexico City Policy, first announced by President Reagan in 1984, which prohibits the granting of federal monies to non-governmental organization that provide or promote abortion.

Under our Constitution, treaties become the law of the land. So it is all the more important that the Congress—the Senate through its ratifying power and the House through its appropriating power—shall reject agreements whose long-range impact on the American family is ominous or unclear. These include the U.N. Convention on Women's Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Conven-

tion on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty as well as the various declarations from the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development. Because of our concern for American sovereignty, domestic management of our fisheries, and our country's long-term energy needs, we have deep reservations about the regulatory, legal, and tax regimes inherent in the Law of the Sea Treaty and congratulate Senate Republicans for blocking its ratification. We strongly reject the U.N. Agenda 21 as erosive of American sovereignty, and we oppose any form of U.N. Global Tax. We oppose any diplomatic efforts that could result in giving the United Nations unprecedented control over the Internet. International regulatory control over the open and free Internet would have disastrous consequences for the United States and the world.

To shield members of our Armed Forces and others in service to America from ideological prosecutions overseas, the Republican Party does not accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. We support statutory protection for U.S. personnel and officials as they act abroad to meet our global security requirements.

Protecting Human Rights

To those who stand in the darkness of tyranny, America has always been a beacon of hope, and so it must remain. That is why we strongly support the work of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, established by Congressional Republicans to advance the rights of persecuted peoples everywhere. It has been shunted aside by the current Administration at a time when its voice more than ever needs to be heard. Religious minorities across the Middle East are being driven from their ancient homelands, fanaticism leaves its bloody mark on both West and East Africa, and even among America's Western friends and allies, pastors and families are penalized for their religious convictions. A Republican Administration will return the advocacy of religious liberty to a central place in our diplomacy.

America's Generosity: International Assistance that Makes a Difference

Americans are the most generous people in the world. Apart from the taxpayer dollars our govern-

ment donates abroad, our foundations, educational institutions, faith-based groups, and committed men and women of charity devote billions of dollars and volunteer hours every year to help the poor and needy around the world. This effort, along with commercial investment from the private sector, dwarfs the results from official development assistance, most of which is based on an outdated, statist, government-to-government model, the proven breeding ground for corruption and mismanagement by foreign kleptocrats. Limiting foreign aid spending helps keep taxes lower, which frees more resources in the private and charitable sectors, whose giving tends to be more effective and efficient.

Foreign aid should serve our national interest, an essential part of which is the peaceful development of less advanced and vulnerable societies in critical parts of the world. Assistance should be seen as an alternative means of keeping the peace, far less costly in both dollars and human lives than military engagement. The economic success and political progress of former aid recipients, from Latin America to East Asia, has justified our investment in their future. U.S. aid should be based on the model of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, for which foreign governments must, in effect, compete for the dollars by showing respect for the rule of law, free enterprise, and measurable results. In short, aid money should follow positive outcomes, not pleas for more cash in the same corrupt official pockets.

The effectiveness of our foreign aid has been limited by the cultural agenda of the current Administration, attempting to impose on foreign countries, especially the peoples of Africa, legalized abortion and the homosexual rights agenda. At the same time, faith-based groups—the sector that has had the best track record in promoting lasting development—have been excluded from grants because they will not conform to the administration’s social agenda. We will reverse this tragic course, encourage more involvement by the most effective aid organizations, and

trust developing peoples to build their future from the ground up.

Combating Human Trafficking

As we approach the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, issued by the first Republican President Abraham Lincoln, we are reminded to be vigilant against human bondage in whatever form it appears. We will use the full force of the law against those who engage in modern-day forms of slavery, including the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the forced labor of men, women, and children. Building on the accomplishments of the last Republican Administration in implementing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, we call for increased diplomatic efforts with foreign governments to root out complicit public officials who facilitate or perpetrate this evil. We highlight the need for greater scrutiny of overseas labor

contractors to prevent the imposition of usurious terms on temporary foreign workers brought to the United States. Our government must address the increasing role of vicious drug cartels and other gangs in controlling human smuggling across our southern border. The principle underlying our Megan’s Law—publicizing the identities of known offenders—should be extended to international travel in order to protect innocent children everywhere.

We affirm our country’s historic tradition of welcoming refugees from troubled lands. In some cases, they are people who stood with us during dangerous times, and they have first call on our hospitality.

Promoting a Free Marketplace of Ideas: Public Diplomacy

International broadcasting of free and impartial information during the Cold War kept truth and hope alive in the Captive Nations. Today, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Radio/TV Marti do the same in other lands where freedom is unknown or endangered. We support these essential extensions of American values and culture and urge their

**We must deter any adversary
who would attack us or use
terror as a tool of government.
Every potential enemy must have
no doubt that our capabilities,
our commitment, and our will to
defeat them are clear,
unwavering, and unequivocal.**

expansion in the Middle East. Recognizing the vital role of social media in recent efforts to promote democracy, we support unrestricted access to the Internet throughout the world to advance the free marketplace of ideas.

Strengthening Ties in the Americas

We will resist foreign influence in our hemisphere. We thereby seek not only to provide for our own security, but also to create a climate for democracy and self-determination throughout the Americas.

The current Administration has turned its back on Latin America, with predictable results. Rather than supporting our democratic allies in the region, the President has prioritized engagement with our enemies in the region. Venezuela represents an increasing threat to U.S. security, a threat which has grown much worse on the current President's watch. In the last three years, Venezuela has become a narco-terrorist state, turning it into an Iranian outpost in the Western hemisphere. The current regime issues Venezuelan passports or visas to thousands of Middle Eastern terrorists offering safe haven to Hezbollah trainers, operatives, recruiters and fundraisers.

Alternatively, we will stand with the true democracies of the region against both Marxist subversion and the drug lords, helping them to become prosperous alternatives to the collapsing model of Venezuela and Cuba.

We affirm our friendship with the People of Cuba and look toward their reunion with the rest of our hemispheric family. The anachronistic regime in Havana which rules them is a mummified relic of the age of totalitarianism, a state-sponsor of terrorism. We reject any dynastic succession of power within the Castro family and affirm the principles codified in U.S. law as conditions for the lifting of trade, travel, and financial sanctions: the legalization of political parties, an independent media, and free and fair internationally-supervised elections. We renew our commitment to Cuba's courageous pro-democracy movement as the protagonists of Cuba's inevitable liberation and democratic future. We call for a dedicated platform for the transmission of Radio and TV Marti and for the promotion of Internet access and circumvention technology as tools to strengthen the pro-democracy movement. We support the work of the Commission

for Assistance to a Free Cuba and affirm the principles of the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966, recognizing the rights of Cubans fleeing Communism.

The war on drugs and the war on terror have become a single enterprise. We salute our allies in this fight, especially the people of Mexico and Colombia. We propose a unified effort on crime and terrorism to coordinate intelligence and enforcement among our regional allies, as well as military-to-military training and intelligence sharing with Mexico, whose people are bearing the brunt of the drug cartels' savage assault.

Our Canadian neighbors can count on our close cooperation and respect. As soon as possible, we will reverse the current Administration's blocking of the Keystone XL Pipeline so that both our countries can profit from this vital venture and there will no need for hemispheric oil to be shipped to China.

Advancing Hope and Prosperity in Africa

PEPFAR, President George W. Bush's Plan for AIDS Relief, is one of the most successful global health programs in history. It has saved literally millions of lives. Along with the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, another initiative of President Bush, it represents America's humanitarian commitment to the peoples of Africa, though these are only one aspect of our assistance to the nations of that continent. From Peace Corps volunteers teaching in one-room schools to U.S. Seabees building village projects, we will continue to strengthen the personal and commercial ties between our country and African nations.

We stand in solidarity with those African countries now under assault by the forces of radical Islam and urge other governments throughout the continent to recognize this threat to them as well. We support closer cooperation in both military and economic matters with those who are under attack by forces which seek our destruction.

U.S. Leadership in the Asian-Pacific Community

We are a Pacific nation with economic, military, and cultural ties to all the countries of the oceanic rim, from Australia, the Philippines, and our Freely Associated States in the Pacific Islands to Japan

and the Republic of Korea. With them, we look toward the restoration of human rights to the suffering people of North Korea and the fulfillment of their wish to be one in peace and freedom. The U.S. will continue to demand the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons programs with a full accounting of its proliferation activities.

We celebrate the political and economic development of most of the nations of Southeast Asia. Their example of material progress through hard work and free enterprise, in tandem with greater democracy should encourage their less fortunate neighbors to set aside crippling ideologies and embrace a more humane future. While our relations with Vietnam have improved, and U.S. investment is welcomed, we need unceasing efforts to obtain an accounting for, and repatriation of the remains of, Americans who gave their lives in the cause of Vietnamese freedom. We cannot overlook the continued repression of human rights and religious freedom, as well as retribution against ethnic minorities and others who assisted U.S. forces during the conflict there.

South Asia

We welcome a stronger relationship with the world's largest democracy, India, both economic and cultural, as well as in terms of national security. We hereby affirm and declare that India is our geopolitical ally and a strategic trading partner. We encourage India to permit greater foreign investment and trade. We urge protection for adherents of all India's religions. Both as Republicans and as Americans, we note with pride the contributions to this country that are being made by our fellow citizens of Indian ancestry.

The aftermath of the last decade's conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan has put enormous pressure on the political and military infrastructure of Pakistan, which faces both internal terrorism and external dangers. The working relationship between our two countries is a necessary, though sometimes difficult, benefit to both, and we look toward the renewal of historic ties that have frayed under the weight of international conflict.

The imminent withdrawal from Afghanistan of the 30,000 "surge" troops sent there two years ago

comes weeks before this year's presidential election and against the advice of the current President's top military commanders. Future decisions by a Republican President will never subordinate military necessity to domestic politics or an artificial timetable. Afghans, Pakistanis, and Americans have a common interest in ridding the region of the Taliban and other insurgent groups, but we cannot expect others to remain resolute unless we show the same determination ourselves. We will expect the Afghan government to crackdown on corruption, respect free elections, and assist our fight against the narcotic trade that fuels the insurgency. We must likewise expect the Pakistan government to sever any connection between its security and intelligence forces and the insurgents. No Pakistani citizen should be punished for helping the United States against the terrorists.

Taiwan

We salute the people of Taiwan, a sound democracy and economic model for mainland China. Our relations must continue to be based upon the provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act. America and Taiwan are united in our shared belief in fair elections, personal liberty, and free enterprise. We oppose any unilateral steps by either side to alter the status quo in the Taiwan Straits on the principle that all issues regarding the island's future must be resolved peacefully, through dialogue, and be agreeable to the people of Taiwan. If China were to violate those principles, the U.S., in accord with the Taiwan Relations Act, will help Taiwan defend itself. We praise steps taken by both sides of the Taiwan Strait to reduce tension and strengthen economic ties. As a loyal friend of America, Taiwan has merited our strong support, including free trade agreements status, as well as the timely sale of defensive arms and full participation in the World Health Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, and other multilateral institutions.

China

We will welcome the emergence of a peaceful and prosperous China, and we will welcome even more the development of a democratic China. Its rulers have discovered that economic freedom leads to national wealth. The next lesson is that political

and religious freedom leads to national greatness. The exposure of the Chinese people to our way of life can be the greatest force for change in their country. We should make it easier for the people of China to experience our vibrant democracy and to see for themselves how freedom works. We welcome the increase in trade and education alliances with the U.S. and the opening of Chinese markets to American companies.

The Chinese government has engaged in a number of activities that we condemn: China's pursuit of advanced military capabilities without any apparent need; suppression of human rights in Tibet, Xinjiang, and other areas; religious persecution; a barbaric one-child policy involving forced abortion; the erosion of democracy in Hong Kong; and its destabilizing claims in the South China Sea. Our serious trade disputes, especially China's failure to enforce international standards for the protection of intellectual property and copyrights, as well as its manipulation of its currency, call for a firm response from a new Republican Administration.

Europe

The West has been the bulwark of democracy and freedom, providing hope and faith to the oppressed around the globe. Our historic ties to the peoples of Europe have been based on shared culture and values, common interests and goals. Their endurance cannot be taken for granted, especially in light of the continent's economic upheaval and demographic changes. Ensuring the continued vitality of our political alliance with Europe through NATO will require effort and understanding on both sides of the Atlantic. We honor our special relationship with the United Kingdom and appreciate its staunch support for our fight against terrorism worldwide. We thank the several other nations of Europe which have contributed to a united effort in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. Their sacrifice will not soon be forgotten. We are heartened by the ongoing reconciliation in Northern Ireland and hopeful that its success might be replicated in Cyprus.

Russia

The heroism—and the suffering—of the people of Russia over the last century demand the world's

respect. As our allies in their Great Patriotic War, they lost 28 million fighting Nazism. As our allies in spirit, they ended the Soviet terror that had consumed so many millions more. They deserve our admiration and support as they now seek to reestablish their rich national identity. We do have common imperatives: ending terrorism, combating nuclear proliferation, promoting trade, and more. To advance those causes, we urge the leaders of their government to reconsider the path they have been following: suppression of opposition parties, the press, and institutions of civil society; unprovoked invasion of the Republic of Georgia, alignment with tyrants in the Middle East; and bullying their neighbors while protecting the last Stalinist regime in Belarus. The Russian people deserve better, as we look to their full participation in the ranks of modern democracies.

Russia should be granted Permanent Normal Trade Relations, but not without sanctions on Russian officials who have used the government to violate human rights. We support enactment of the Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act as a condition of expanded trade relations with Russia.

Our Unequivocal Support of Israel

Israel and the United States are part of the great fellowship of democracies who speak the same language of freedom and justice, and the right of every person to live in peace. The security of Israel is in the vital national security interest of the United States; our alliance is based not only on shared interests, but also shared values. We affirm our unequivocal commitment to Israel's security and will ensure that it maintains a qualitative edge in military technology over any potential adversaries. We support Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state with secure, defensible borders; and we envision two democratic states—Israel with Jerusalem as its capital and Palestine—living in peace and security. For that to happen, the Palestinian people must support leaders who reject terror, embrace the institutions and ethos of democracy, and respect the rule of law. We call on Arab governments throughout the region to help advance that goal. Israel should not be expected to negotiate with entities pledged to her destruction. We call on the new government in Egypt to fully uphold its peace treaty with Israel.

The U.S. seeks a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, negotiated between the parties themselves with the assistance of the U.S., without the imposition of an artificial timetable. Essential to that process will be a just, fair, and realistic framework for dealing with the issues that can be settled on the basis of mutually agreed changes reflecting today's realities as well as tomorrow's hopes.

The Challenges of a Changing Middle East

We recognize the historic nature of the events of the past two years—the Arab Spring—that have unleashed democratic movements leading to the overthrow of dictators who have been menaces to global security for decades. In a season of upheaval, it is necessary to be prepared for anything. That is true on the ground in the Middle East, and it will be equally true in the next Administration, particularly with a new President unbound by the failures of the past. We welcome the aspirations of the Arab peoples and others for greater freedom, and we hope that greater liberty—and with it, a greater chance for peace—will result from the recent turmoil. Many governments in the region have given substantial assistance to the U.S. over the last decade because they understood that our struggle against terror is not an ethnic or religious fight, and that violent extremists are abusers of their faith, not its champions.

On the other hand, radical elements like Hamas and Hezbollah must be isolated because they do not meet the standards of peace and diplomacy of the international community. We call for the restoration of Lebanon's independence, which those groups have

virtually destroyed. We support the transition to a post-Assad Syrian government that is representative of its people, protects the rights of all minorities and religions, respects the territorial integrity of its neighbors, and contributes to peace and stability in the region. We offer a continuing partnership with the people of Iraq, who have endured extremist terror to now have a chance to build their own security and democracy. We urge special efforts to preserve and protect the ethnic and religious diversity of their nation.

Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons capability threatens America, Israel, and the world. That threat has only become worse during the current Administration. A continuation of its failed engagement policy with Iran will lead to nuclear cascade. In solidarity with the international community, America must lead the effort to prevent Iran from building and possessing nuclear weapons capability. We express our respect for the people of Iran, who seek peace and aspire to freedom. Their current regime is unworthy of them. It exports terror and provided weapons that killed our troops in Iraq. We affirm the unanimous resolution of the U.S. Senate calling for "elections that are free, fair, and meet international standards" and "a representative and responsive democratic government that respects human rights, civil liberties, and the rule of law." We urge the next Republican President to unequivocally assert his support for the Iranian people as they protest their despotic regime. We must retain all options in dealing with a situation that gravely threatens our security, our interests, and the safety of our friends.

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Special thanks to the following for their valuable insights:

Former Executive Directors:

Ambassador John Bolton, 1984; William Martin, 1992; Judy VanRest, 1996;
Mitch Bainwol, 2000; Anne Phelps, 2004; Steven Duffield, 2008

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Candi Wolff, 2000

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Tony Feather, James Tobin, Brian Noyes

Special thanks to:

Betsy Ankney, Sara Armstrong, Julia Biebighauser, Tyler Brown, Britt Carter, Brittany Cohan, Cesar deGuzman, Sharon Day, Dirk Eyman, Mike Gilding, Wells Griffith, Bill Harris, Anne Hathaway, Rebecca Heilig, Aly Higgins, Colleen House, Mark Isaacson, Bettina Inclain, Jeff Larson, Jeremy Kenney, Tom Kise, Tory Maguire, James Min, Johanna Persing, Joe Pounder, Ryan Price, Matt Sauvage, Tim Schigel, Sean Spicer, Elizabeth Steil, Bill Steiner, Christine Samuelian, Matt Terrill, Jennifer Voldness, Rick Wiley, Larissa Ziemann and all our volunteers

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