

1                   **REPORT OF THE POLK COUNTY PLATFORM COMMITTEE**  
2                   **OF THE IOWA DEMOCRATIC PARTY**  
3                   **SUBMITTED TO THE DELEGATES AT THE POLK COUNTY CONVENTION**  
4                   **MARCH 4, 2006**

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6                   **STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**  
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8 We are justly proud of our Democratic Party, its heritage, and its  
9 accomplishments. No part of our heritage is more valuable than our belief in the  
10 rights and worth of each individual. This belief commits us to promoting and  
11 safeguarding a quality of life that recognizes and benefits human dignity and  
12 which offers opportunities to share in that realization. Only by reaffirming that  
13 belief and acting resolutely upon that commitment can we as Democrats remain  
14 true to our traditions and worthy of our heritage.  
15

16 We know that our success as a nation rests largely on the strength,  
17 inventiveness, and perseverance of our citizens. We recognize that we live in a  
18 nation that has denied full participation to certain individuals based on  
19 discriminatory perceptions and practices. Our history as a party and as a nation  
20 compels us to oppose discrimination based on race, age, disability, gender,  
21 economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other bias-based  
22 categorization imposed on individuals or groups.  
23

24 The Democratic Party believes in and will continue to work for truly  
25 representative government responsive to all the American people rather than  
26 particular special interests; compassionate, progressive, responsible, and fair;  
27 steadfastly seeking to promote liberty, justice, security, equality, and individual  
28 freedom for every citizen; dedicated to achieving peace, prosperity, and a  
29 national outlook of confidence and hope.  
30

31 We recognize that the original Constitution and Bill of Rights were a precious gift  
32 handed down to us by the Founders of our nation. We understand that  
33 defending our country means defending the Constitution. They are inseparable.  
34 Democrats understand that if we give up some of our rights in the name of  
35 defending our country, we are giving up that which makes us Americans. Our  
36 liberties apply all the time, not just when convenient. The right of all Americans  
37 to dissent must be protected.  
38

39 As temporary stewards of our natural resources, we demand that our governing  
40 bodies develop, strengthen and enforce policies and laws protecting our  
41 environment permanently from wasteful and indiscriminate use. Clean air,  
42 healthy water and diverse ecosystems, including our national parks, oceans and  
43 forests, are part of our children's future and must be protected.  
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45 Young people are our future. We want young people to join our party. County  
46 chapters of Young Democrats should be established and supported.

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We encourage all levels of the Iowa Democratic Party to develop programs to increase participation in and accessibility to Democratic Party Caucuses.

We take pride in Senator Harkin, Representative Boswell, Governor Vilsack, Lieutenant Governor Pederson, Attorney General Miller, State Treasurer Fitzgerald, Secretary of State Culver, and Secretary of Agriculture Judge. They work diligently for Iowans and our nation. They deserve our appreciation and we thank them for their hard work.

We urge the election of Democrats to all congressional seats. We must recruit candidates for and re-elect our outstanding members of the Iowa General Assembly to regain the majority in both houses.

In the light of our ideals, traditions, and history, we present our Democratic candidates for local, state, and national offices. We are confident that these persons will continue to work for liberty and justice for all. We warmly and openly invite all Iowans to join our efforts to achieve these goals, because a victory for the Democratic Party in 2006 means hope for a just and secure future for our state and nation.

## **STATEMENT OF ISSUES**

### **AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

#### **WE SUPPORT:**

- Full enforcement of the federal Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.
- Local (county) control of Confined Animal Feeding Operations site plans with state standards.
- Establishing strong state air quality standards, fines, and penalties for Confined Animal Feeding Operations.
- Repealing the state's "Credible Data" law.
- Fully funding the Resource Enhancement and Protection Fund (REAP).
- Protecting and restoring Iowa's unique natural resources and features and increasing the size and ecological diversity of Iowa's public lands.
- Expanding the bottle bill to cover tea, water, juice drinks, sports drinks and other non-carbonated beverages, increasing the handling fee paid to those who provide redemption services, and raising the deposit to 10 cents.

- 93 • Re-implementing the "Roadless Rule" in National Forests.  
94
- 95 • All levels of government strategically investing in clean energy, conservation  
96 and energy efficiency, and emphasizing job growth, energy independence and  
97 stricter environmental standards.  
98
- 99 • Research, development and implementation of renewable energy technology  
100 such as wind, solar, ethanol, methane gas, biomass, and hydrogen.  
101
- 102 • Promoting incentives for qualified renewable energy generated by small  
103 producers, especially family farms.  
104
- 105 • Tax incentives for purchase of ultra-efficient vehicles and appliances.  
106
- 107 • Government incentives for weatherization and energy conservation measures  
108 in Iowa's older homes and other buildings.  
109
- 110 • Reducing mercury levels emitted from power plants.  
111
- 112 • All efforts to reduce or reverse global warming, especially reflecting adherence  
113 to the Kyoto Protocol.  
114
- 115 • A moratorium on the development, construction or expansion of nuclear power  
116 plants in Iowa.  
117
- 118 • Legislation designed to encourage development and redevelopment inside our  
119 current city and town limits, excluding development of existing parklands.  
120
- 121 • Protecting farmland and natural areas from urban sprawl, and highway and  
122 other types of development.  
123
- 124 • Restricting the Urban Renewal District designation to its original intended use  
125 for blighted urban areas.  
126
- 127 • Requiring the majority consent of landowners in unincorporated areas,  
128 including those of less than ten-acre parcels, prior to any government entity  
129 designating such area as an Urban Renewal District or Urban Renewal Zone  
130 for any purpose.  
131
- 132 • Amending Iowa Code chapter 368.71(a), and the Iowa Administrative Code in  
133 its pertinent sections, to require a vote of individual landowners, irrespective of  
134 the number of acres each holds, in any 80/20 involuntary annexation petition.  
135
- 136 • Striking the provision that public land may be included in the calculation of  
137 land for or against annexation in any 80/20 annexation petition.  
138

- 139 • Limiting Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to the improvement of blighted rural  
140 and urban areas.
- 141
- 142 • Aid and assistance to small farmers from all levels of government.  
143
- 144 • Capping federal farm subsidies at \$250,000 per farm to encourage the  
145 targeting of benefits to family-sized operations.  
146
- 147 • Enforcing and strengthening anti-trust laws to address the rising concentration  
148 of market power and resulting market manipulation by large agribusiness  
149 firms.  
150
- 151 • Legalizing hemp grown for industrial applications.  
152
- 153 ➤ Restricting the pollution control property tax break to family farms (minority  
154 report to delete)  
155
- 156 ➤ Repealing the ban on using the power of eminent domain to connect  
157 recreational trails (minority report to delete)  
158
- 159 ➤ Eliminating agriculture land tax credits and subsidies for non-farmers holding  
160 land for development. (controversial)  
161
- 162 ➤ *Nullifying the prior urban renewal designation of any unincorporated land*  
163 *parcels without owner consent.* (minority report to re-instate)  
164

## 165 **ECONOMY, COMMERCE AND LABOR**

### 166 WE SUPPORT:

- 167
- 168
- 169 • The right of all unions to negotiate Fair Share clauses in their contracts.  
170
- 171 • Repealing the "Right to Work Law" (Section 14b of the National Labor  
172 Relations Act) and Iowa Code chapter 731 and appropriate sections of chapter  
173 20.  
174
- 175 • Legislation opposing privatization of governmental jobs and services.  
176
- 177 • Legislation to fully fund Iowa Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS)  
178 and maintain the 60% employer - 40% employee contribution level with long  
179 term funding.  
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- 181 • Fair lending legislation to close loopholes, especially targeting predatory  
182 lenders.  
183
- 184 • Strengthening legislation to protect existing employee/retiree pensions.

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- Legislation to require full portability of pensions.
- Fair free trade agreements with countries that promote human rights, livable wages and high environmental standards.
- Requiring repayment of state incentives received by companies that close or move jobs out of state.
- Energy independence and the development of alternative energy sources.
- Increased funding and promotion of public transportation alternatives.
- Increased and aggressive investigation and prosecution of corporate malfeasance.
- Urban development and redevelopment.
- Enforcing and strengthening anti-trust laws to address the rising concentration of market power and resulting market manipulation.
- Laws that assure "Temp" jobs do not supplant/replace full time employees (controversial)

WE OPPOSE:

- Any effort to repeal or diminish the rights of public officials to utilize Project Labor Agreements for public works construction projects in Iowa.

**EDUCATION**

WE SUPPORT:

- Public education as a civil and human right and the foundation of a free, democratic, and just society.
- Empowering all students to be critical, creative, and constructive citizens.
- Recognizing and valuing the unique and diverse needs, strengths, interests, experiences, and potential of each student.
- Tailoring education to each student's individual needs and interests.
- Understanding the power of relationships and smaller learning communities in cultivating student learning.

- 231 • Promoting the development of the whole student.  
232
- 233 • Assessing students in multiple, authentic, real-world ways that encourage  
234 meaningful, challenging, and relevant learning.  
235
- 236 • Acknowledging and addressing the many opportunity gaps and contributing  
237 factors, especially those associated with poverty, which impede student  
238 learning and development.  
239
- 240 • Valuing the critical roles that public education professionals and parents play  
241 in developing our nation's most valuable resource, its citizens.  
242
- 243 • Respecting the importance of community involvement, and the input of parents  
244 and public education professionals in matters of critical education problem  
245 solving and decision-making.  
246
- 247 • Employing an ample, equitable, and non-punitive system of funding assuring  
248 that public education professionals have the resources necessary to create  
249 rich learning experiences for all students.  
250
- 251 • A complete overhaul of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) version of the  
252 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).  
253
- 254 • Increased media and technological literacy and support for students.  
255
- 256 • Limited class size and teacher/student ratios.  
257
- 258 • Ensuring that all Iowa schools are safe places, including but not limited to  
259 protecting students from dangers such as fire, physical plant & grounds  
260 failings, predators from outside & inside, and bullying of all kinds.  
261
- 262 • Funding Iowa teacher salaries at or above the national average.  
263
- 264 • Increased and sustainable funding for public early childhood programs.  
265
- 266 • Increased funding for the arts as an essential part of a student's public school  
267 preK-12 experience.  
268
- 269 • Increased funding for public vocational education.  
270
- 271 • Adequate funding for professionally staffed public school libraries.  
272
- 273 • Funding of Iowa Community Colleges and the Regent's Institutions at levels  
274 necessary to avoid tuition increases.  
275

- 276 • Restoring and maintaining Iowa Tuition grant program funding.  
277
- 278 • Restoring funds from previous cuts to the Area Education Agencies and  
279 additional funding through the allowable growth rate.  
280
- 281 • State and federal funding for reproductive health services and for sex  
282 education that is age-appropriate and medically accurate..  
283
- 284 • Full federal funding for public education programs of the National Endowment  
285 for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Public Broadcasting  
286 System.  
287
- 288 • Increased funding for public preschool and after-school programs.  
289
- 290 • Adequate and equitable state and federal funding that does not increase  
291 regulations and bureaucracy.  
292
- 293 ➤ Establishing external and more stringent oversight of the fiscal management  
294 of Iowa schools to lessen individual school board control and ensure  
295 adherence to state & other regulatory procedural and other requirements for  
296 expenditures of public funds. (controversial)  
297

298 **WE OPPOSE:**  
299

- 300 • The overuse of standardized and multiple choice testing and their detrimental  
301 effects on student learning.  
302
- 303 • Privatizing public schools, through vouchers, private charter schools, or other  
304 means.  
305
- 306 • Replacing high, student/community sensitive local standards and curriculum  
307 with state or nationally mandated standards, tests, or curriculum.  
308
- 309 • Tying school funding or teacher salaries to student test results.  
310
- 311 • Merit pay and pay for performance as means to increase teacher salaries.  
312
- 313 • Signing bonuses or other incentives for teachers in subject areas that are in  
314 short supply.  
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316 **GOVERNMENT AND LAW**  
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318 **WE SUPPORT:**  
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- 320 • Adding sexual orientation, gender identity and national origin as protected  
321 classes and extending these protections to military service.

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- Enacting a federal shield law for reporters.
- Legal recognition of domestic partnerships and civil unions of any two people of legal age.
- Using restitution and rehabilitation instead of incarceration for nonviolent offenders, as an alternative to building new prisons.
- Repealing the 2000 foot residential restriction on convicted sex offenders.
- Categorizing types of sexual offenders and adopting realistic measures to protect society.
- Removing the cap on earnings for Social Security contributions.
- Extending Social Security coverage to all federal, state, and local government employees.
- Rolling back tax cuts on the wealthiest citizens.
- A tax system that is fair, equitable, and progressive, and that provides for the needs of lowans.
- Full funding of entitlement programs.
- Public financing of legislative and statewide office campaigns.
- Requiring a verifiable paper audit trail for electronic voting.
- Permitting same day voter registration.
- Removal of electronic pull-tab machines from non-casino businesses and a moratorium on the expansion of gambling in Iowa.
- Comprehensive reform of border control and our immigration system.
- Improving access to legal immigration.
- Protecting the civil rights of immigrants and their families.
- Equal consideration by CIS (Citizenship and Immigration Services) for all people seeking political asylum.
- Repeal of the Patriot Act

- 367
- 368 • Fully funding legal assistance to indigents.
- 369
- 370 • Mandatory licensing of real estate appraisers.
- 371
- 372 • Enacting a mandatory helmet law for ATV, motorcycle and moped operators.
- 373
- 374 • Initiation of a prompt investigation into crimes that may have been committed
- 375 by President George W. Bush or his administration.
- 376
- 377 • Legislation to increase the oversight of agencies protecting the elderly.
- 378
- 379 • State provision of matching funds to support veterans' service organizations to
- 380 provide trained personnel at regional VA offices and VA medical centers.
- 381
- 382 • Providing all veterans free and unrestricted access to their own medical and
- 383 psychological records.
- 384
- 385 • Expansion of treatment for gambling addiction for people of all ages.
- 386
- 387 • Providing family health benefits to all serving military personnel.
- 388
- 389 • Repealing the drug tax stamp.
- 390
- 391 • Establishing a new program to track sexual predators through the use of
- 392 electronic monitoring and increased funding to upgrade criminal records and
- 393 maintain and improve state sex offender registration.
- 394
- 395 • Greatly improved disaster planning and response.
- 396
- 397 • Making identity theft and the use of false identities in electronic commerce
- 398 felonies and increasing enforcement.
- 399
- 400 • Making Iowa the 50th state to give consumers the right to sue for violations of
- 401 the state Consumer Fraud Act.
- 402
- 403 • Making all Health care costs fully deductible outside standard deduction
- 404 structure.
- 405
- 406 • Awarding full combat pay retroactively to American military personnel serving
- 407 in Iraq and other combat theatres
- 408
- 409 • *Limiting Congressional bills to one issue and prohibiting unrelated riders.*
- 410 (minority report to re-instate)
- 411

- 412 • *Changing animal torture to a felony.* (minority to re-instate)  
413  
414 • *A constitutional amendment to elect president and vice president by direct*  
415 *vote.* (minority report to re-instate)  
416

417 WE OPPOSE:

- 418  
419 • The death penalty.  
420  
421 • Privatization of Social Security in any form.  
422  
423 • Allowing faith-based social services programs to proselytize or discriminate  
424 when they receive public funding  
425  
426 • the erosion of the separation between church and state.  
427  
428 • Compulsory national identification.  
429  
430 • Mandatory minimum sentencing with the exception of the sentence of life in  
431 prison without the possibility of parole for first degree murder.  
432  
433 • Electronic surveillance by government officials without a warrant.  
434  
435 • Any limits on financial judgments in civil liability lawsuits.  
436  
437 • Unreasonable use of eminent domain to transfer private property from one  
438 owner to another.  
439  
440 ➤ Corporate personhood with Fourteenth Amendment rights. (controversial)

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442 **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

443  
444 WE SUPPORT:

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446 • Increasing the cigarette tax and using it to fund tobacco related health and  
447 education programs.  
448  
449 • Requiring smoke-free workplaces.  
450  
451 • Federal funding for voluntary international family planning.  
452  
453 • Providing all Americans with access to affordable health care through a  
454 standardized benefit program developed via a public/private partnership.  
455  
456 • Requiring Medicare to bargain for lower prices on behalf of all Americans  
457 eligible for Medicare.

458

459 • Promoting broader stem cell research at all levels and increasing state and  
460 federal stem cell research funding.

461

462 • A clear, effective and safe plan to eliminate lead-based paint.

463

464 • Increasing funding to adequately staff child welfare services.

465

466 • Adequately funding comprehensive care and treatment services for children.

467

468 • Preventing human service providers from discriminating on the basis of race,  
469 color, creed, disability, religion, national origin, gender, or sexual orientation,  
470 including but not limited to the provision of services or hiring practices.

471

472 • Increasing funding to provide adequate in-home and/or community-based  
473 services to senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

474

475 • Prohibiting pharmacists from declining medication based solely on moral or  
476 religious bases.

477

478 • Extending foster care services to age 21 to provide transitional services when  
479 necessary.

480

481 • Increased funding for domestic violence services and shelter.

482

483 • A woman's right to choose.

484

485 • State-sponsored childcare.

486

487 • Renewable sources of funding for the Iowa Housing Trust Fund.

488

489 • The provision of affordable, accessible, transitional and permanent housing for  
490 low-income and homeless persons.

491

492 • Increased funding for emergency shelters.

493

494 • Requiring that all public buildings be accessible and safe for persons with  
495 disabilities as required by the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)  
496 accessibility guidelines.

497

498 • Providing financial assistance, with funding from public/private partnerships, to  
499 increase the number of first-time homebuyers, particularly those with low to  
500 moderate income, and help them keep their homes.

501

502 • Legalizing marijuana for medical use.

503

504 • Requiring government and private health care plans to cover medically  
505 necessary or beneficial complementary and alternative medicines and  
506 therapies.

507

508 ➤ *Requiring the state to pay full cost for services purchased from private*  
509 *agencies. (minority report to re-instate)*

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## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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513 WE SUPPORT:

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515 • The U.S. taking the lead in the international elimination of nuclear, biological  
516 and chemical weapons of mass destruction.

517

518 • The U.S. orderly removing all of its troops from Iraq as soon as possible and  
519 beginning no later than October 1, 2006, closing all of its bases in Iraq, and  
520 meeting its responsibility for restructuring efforts in Iraq under international  
521 law.

522

523 • The discontinuing U.S. participation in free trade agreements (WTO, NAFTA,  
524 CAFTA) until all free trade agreements conform to the social ideals of fair  
525 trade.

526

527 • The immediate closing of the School of the Americas (Western Hemisphere  
528 Institute for Security Cooperation) at Fort Benning, GA.

529

530 • The resumption of full diplomatic and economic relations with the government  
531 of Cuba.

532

533 • The continuing full participation of the U.S. in the United Nations.

534

535 • The U.S. paying its fair assessed dues to the United Nations.

536

537 • Ratification of the United Nations convention for the Rights of the Child and  
538 the United Nations convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination  
539 against women.

540

541 • The creation of a Cabinet Level U.S. Department of Peace.

542

543 • The U.S. signing and ratifying the Ottawa Treaty to ban landmines.

544

545 • The U.S. signing and ratifying the Rome Statute creating the International  
546 Criminal Court.

547

- 548 • The U.S. signing and ratifying the United Nations Kyoto Protocol on Global  
549 Warming.  
550
- 551 • The United Nations participation in the Comprehensive Nuclear Testing Ban  
552 Treaty and the Biological Weapons Convention Protocol.  
553
- 554 • A United Nations International Code of Conduct on arms transfers.  
555
- 556 • All peaceful efforts to achieve a secure Israel and a separate, secure  
557 Palestinian State.  
558
- 559 • Guaranteeing equal access to people of all faiths to Jerusalem.  
560
- 561 • Funding of International Family Planning Programs.  
562
- 563 • Investing in comprehensive approaches to prevent the spread of HIV and  
564 AIDS.  
565
- 566 • Multi-lateral trade agreements which foster protection of workers rights, human  
567 rights and the environment.  
568
- 569 • Permitting developing nations to access low-cost generic medications for AIDS  
570 and other diseases.  
571
- 572 • Broader debt cancellation for impoverished and developing nations.  
573
- 574 • Permitting developing nations to access low-cost generic medications for AIDS  
575 and other diseases.  
576
- 577 ➤ According all US war detainees anywhere in the world prisoner of war status  
578 in accordance with the Geneva Convention. (controversial)  
579
- 580 ➤ *Charging under applicable law, furnishing legal counsel, or releasing all U.S.*  
581 *war detainees anywhere in the world.* (minority report to re-instate)  
582
- 583 ➤ *Working with all parties to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.* (minority report  
584 to re-instate)  
585

586 WE OPPOSE:  
587

- 588 • Privatization of essential public services in the US and other nations.  
589
- 590 • The use of torture by the U.S. government and the practice of rendition of  
591 individuals to countries that continue to practice torture.  
592

- 593 • The operation of secret rendition prison facilities by the U.S. government  
594 anywhere in the world.  
595
- 596 • The continuing subversion of democratic principles and processes by the Bush  
597 Administration in the name of national security.