



2016 General Election of the United States

Major and Minor Party Platforms

In Comparison with Catholic Teaching

On the Non-Negotiable Moral Issues

And the Negotiable Policy Issues

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I.
**The Platforms with Respect to
Non-Negotiable Moral Issues**

Pope Benedict VI, Address to European Parliamentary Group, 30 March 2006.

As far as the Catholic Church is concerned, the principal focus of her interventions in the public arena is the protection and promotion of the dignity of the person, and she is thereby consciously drawing particular attention to principles which are not negotiable. Among these the following emerge clearly today:

- (a) **protection of life in all its stages**, from the first moment of conception until natural death;
- (b) **recognition and promotion of the natural structure of the family as a union between a man and a woman based on marriage**, and its defense from attempts to make it juridically equivalent to radically different forms of union which in reality harm it and contribute to its destabilization, obscuring its particular character and its irreplaceable social role;
- (c) **the protection of the right of parents to educate their children.**

Each of the **Non-Negotiable** issues identified by the Pope involve *essential goods* which are necessary for the flourishing of human beings and human societies. Their violation involve *intrinsic evils* which can never be justified by good intentions or circumstances.

Additionally, the **Non-Negotiables** are logically and actually prior to all other kinds of goods, such as basic health or a just economy. They, and all other lesser goods, presume life, the proper functioning of the basic cell of society (marriage and family), as well as religious freedom (and authentic freedom generally), in order to attain their fulfillment.

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[Democratic Party Platform](#)

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[Green Party Platform](#)

1. Dignity of Life from Conception to Natural Death

Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* 38. [T]he common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights – for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture – is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with the maximum determination.

Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* 58. Among all the crimes which can be committed against life, procured abortion has characteristics making it particularly serious and deplorable. The Second Vatican Council defines abortion, together with infanticide, as an ‘unspeakable crime’.

EV 59. [O]ne cannot overlook the network of complicity which reaches out to include international institutions, foundations and associations which systematically campaign for the legalization and spread of abortion in the world.

EV 71. The legal toleration of abortion or of euthanasia can in no way claim to be based on respect for the conscience of others, precisely because society has the right and the duty to protect itself against the abuses which can occur in the name of conscience and under the pretext of freedom.

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Democratic Platform

We will appoint judges who defend the constitutional principles of liberty and equality for all, protect a woman’s right to safe and legal abortion. (p.25)

We will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers, which provide critical health services to millions of people. (p.37)

We believe unequivocally that every woman should have access to quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion—regardless of where she lives, how much money she makes, or how she is insured. We believe that reproductive health is core to women’s, men’s, and young people’s health and wellbeing.... We will continue to oppose—and seek to overturn—federal and state laws and policies that impede a woman’s access to abortion, including by repealing the Hyde Amendment. (p.37)

We will support sexual and reproductive health and rights around the globe. In addition to expanding the availability of affordable family planning information and contraceptive

supplies, we believe that safe abortion must be part of comprehensive maternal and women's health care and included as part of America's global health programming. (p.46)

Republican Platform

The Constitution's guarantee that no one can "be deprived of life, liberty or property" deliberately echoes the Declaration of Independence's proclamation that "all" are "endowed by their Creator" with the inalienable right to life. Accordingly, we assert the sanctity of human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution and legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to children before birth. (p.13)

We oppose the use of public funds to perform or promote abortion or to fund organizations, like Planned Parenthood, so long as they provide or refer for elective abortions or sell fetal body parts rather than provide healthcare. (p.13)

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. (p.37)

We support the right of parents to consent to medical treatment for their minor children and urge enactment of legislation that would require parental consent for their daughter to be transported across state lines for abortion. Providers should not be permitted to unilaterally withhold services because a patient's life is deemed not worth living. (p.37)

American taxpayers should not be forced to fund abortion. As Democrats abandon this four decade-old bipartisan consensus, we call for codification of the Hyde Amendment and its application across the government, including Obamacare. We call for a permanent ban on federal funding and subsidies for abortion and healthcare plans that include abortion coverage. (p.37)

Libertarian Platform

Recognizing that abortion is a sensitive issue and that people can hold good-faith views on all sides, we believe that government should be kept out of the matter, leaving the question to each person for their conscientious consideration.

Green Party Platform

Women's rights must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman's right as a full participant in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination or interference in the

intensely personal choice about whether to have a child. . . . Women's right to control their bodies is non-negotiable. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available. The "morning-after" pill must be affordable and easily accessible without a prescription, together with a government-sponsored public relations campaign to educate women about this form of contraception. Clinics must be accessible and must offer advice on contraception and the means for contraception; consultation about abortion and the performance of abortions, and; abortion regardless of age or marital status.

We endorse women's right to use contraception and, when they choose, to have an abortion. This right cannot be limited to women's age or marital status. Contraception and abortion must be included in all health insurance policies in the U.S., and any state government must be able to legally offer these services free of charge to women at the poverty level.

Public health agencies operating abroad should be allowed to offer family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that ask for those services. We oppose our government's habit of cutting family planning funds when those funds go to agencies in foreign countries that give out contraceptive devices, offer advice on abortion, and perform abortions.

2. Dignity of Natural Marriage & Family

Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* 44. It is thus becoming a social and even economic necessity once more to hold up to future generations the beauty of marriage and the family, and the fact that these institutions correspond to the deepest needs and dignity of the person. In view of this, States are called to *enact policies promoting the centrality and the integrity of the family* founded on marriage between a man and a woman, the primary vital cell of society, and to assume responsibility for its economic and fiscal needs, while respecting its essentially relational character.

Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* 251. In discussing the dignity and mission of the family, the Synod Fathers observed that, 'as for proposals to place unions between homosexual persons on the same level as marriage, there are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God's plan for marriage and family.' It is unacceptable 'that local Churches should be subjected to pressure in this matter and that international bodies should make financial aid to poor countries dependent on the introduction of laws to establish marriage between persons of the same sex.'

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* 70. ... Marriage must be defined, recognized, and protected as a lifelong exclusive commitment between a man and a woman, and as the source of the next generation and the protective haven for children. The institution of marriage is undermined by the ideology of ‘gender’ that dismisses sexual difference and the complementarity of the sexes and falsely presents ‘gender’ as nothing more than a social construct or psychological reality, which a person may choose at variance with his or her biological reality (cf. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 224).

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Democratic Platform

Democrats applaud last year’s decision by the Supreme Court that recognized LGBT people—like every other American—have the right to marry the person they love. But there is still much work to be done. (p.19)

Republican Platform

We condemn the Supreme Court’s ruling in *United States v. Windsor*, which wrongly removed the ability of Congress to determine marriage policy in federal law. We also condemn the Supreme Court’s lawless ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*. . . . We endorse the First Amendment Defense Act, Republican legislation in the House and Senate which will bar government discrimination against individuals and businesses for acting on the belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. (p.11)

We support the right of the people to conduct their businesses in accordance with their religious beliefs and condemn public officials who have proposed boycotts against businesses that support traditional marriage. We pledge to protect those business owners who have been subjected to hate campaigns, threats of violence, and other attempts to deny their civil rights. (p.12)

Foremost among those institutions is the American family. It is the foundation of civil society, and the cornerstone of the family is natural marriage, the union of one man and one woman. . . . We oppose policies and laws that create a financial incentive for or encourage cohabitation. (p.31)

Our laws and our government’s regulations should recognize marriage as the union of one man and one woman and actively promote married family life as the basis of a stable and prosperous society. For that reason, as explained elsewhere in this platform, we do not

accept the Supreme Court's redefinition of marriage and we urge its reversal, whether through judicial reconsideration or a constitutional amendment returning control over marriage to the states. We oppose government discrimination against businesses or entities which decline to sell items or services to individuals for activities that go against their religious views about such activities. (p.31-32)

We urge marriage penalties to be removed from the tax code and public assistance programs. (p.32)

Libertarian Platform

Sexual orientation, preference, gender, or gender identity should have no impact on the government's treatment of individuals, such as in current marriage, child custody, adoption, immigration or military service laws. Government does not have the authority to define, license or restrict personal relationships. Consenting adults should be free to choose their own sexual practices and personal relationships.

Green Party Platform

We call for ending governmental use of the doctrines of specific religions to define the nature of family, marriage, and the type and character of personal relationships between consenting adults.

3. Freedom of Religion

Second Vatican Council, Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae* 1-2. [C]onstitutional limits should be set to the powers of government, in order that there may be no encroachment on the rightful freedom of the person and of associations. This demand for freedom in human society chiefly regards the quest for the values proper to the human spirit. It regards, in the first place, the free exercise of religion in society. . . . This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits. [**N.B.** those limits are those of the natural moral law (forbidding murder and other intrinsic evils) which can never be justified by alleging "freedom of conscience"]

Pope Francis, Encyclical *Evangelium Gaudium* 255. . . . A healthy pluralism, one which genuinely respects differences and values them as such, does not entail privatizing religions in an attempt to reduce them to the quiet obscurity of the individual's conscience or to relegate them to the enclosed precincts of churches, synagogues or mosques. This would

represent, in effect, a new form of discrimination and authoritarianism. The respect due to the agnostic or non-believing minority should not be arbitrarily imposed in a way that silences the convictions of the believing majority or ignores the wealth of religious traditions.

Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* 84. At the same time I feel it important to reiterate that the overall education of children is a ‘most serious duty’ and at the same time a ‘primary right’ of parents. This is not just a task or a burden, but an essential and inalienable right that parents are called to defend and of which no one may claim to deprive them. The State offers educational programmes in a subsidiary way, supporting the parents in their indeclinable role; parents themselves enjoy the right to choose freely the kind of education – accessible and of good quality – which they wish to give their children in accordance with their convictions. Schools do not replace parents, but complement them. This is a basic principle: ‘all other participants in the process of education are only able to carry out their responsibilities in the name of the parents, with their consent and, to a certain degree, with their authorization.’

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* 71. . . . We oppose contraceptive and abortion mandates in public programs and health plans, which endanger rights of conscience and can interfere with parents’ right to guide the moral formation of their children.

***Forming Consciences* 80.** . . . Employers, including religious groups and family-owned businesses, should be able to provide health care without compromising their moral or religious convictions, and individuals should be able to purchase health care that accords with their faith.

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Democratic Platform

We support a progressive vision of religious freedom that respects pluralism and rejects the misuse of religion to discriminate. . . . Democrats know that our nation, our communities, and our lives are made vastly stronger and richer by faith in many forms and the countless acts of justice, mercy, and tolerance it inspires. We believe in lifting up and valuing the good work of people of faith and religious organizations and finding ways to support that work where possible. (p.19)

Republican Platform

We value the right of America’s religious leaders to preach, and Americans to speak freely, according to their faith. Republicans believe the federal government, specifically the IRS, is constitutionally prohibited from policing or censoring speech based on religious convictions or beliefs, and therefore we urge the repeal of the Johnson Amendment. (p.11)

We pledge to defend the religious beliefs and rights of conscience of all Americans and to safeguard religious institutions against government control. (p.11)

We likewise endorse the efforts of Republican state legislators and governors who have defied intimidation from corporations and the media in defending religious liberty. We support laws to confirm the longstanding American tradition that religious individuals and institutions can educate young people, receive government benefits, and participate in public debates without having to check their religious beliefs at the door. (p.11-12)

To protect religious liberty we will ensure that faith-based institutions, especially those that are vital parts of underserved neighborhoods, do not face discrimination by government. (p.32)

We support the rights of conscience of military chaplains of all faiths to practice their faith free from political interference. (p. 43)

Libertarian Platform

We support full freedom of expression and oppose government censorship, regulation or control of communications media and technology. We favor the freedom to engage in or abstain from any religious activities that do not violate the rights of others. We oppose government actions which either aid or attack any religion.

Green Party Platform

We call for: a.) Prosecution of hate crimes based on religious affiliation or practice; c.) Elimination of displays of religious symbols, monuments, or statements on government buildings, property, websites, money, or documents.

II.
The Platforms with Respect to
Negotiable Issues

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Letter to the U.S. Bishops (July 2004)*. ... Not all moral issues have the same moral weight as abortion and euthanasia. For example, if a Catholic

were to be at odds with the Holy Father on the application of capital punishment or on the decision to wage war, he would not for that reason be considered unworthy to present himself to receive Holy Communion. While the Church exhorts civil authorities to seek peace, not war, and to exercise discretion and mercy in imposing punishment on criminals, it may still be permissible to take up arms to repel an aggressor or to have recourse to capital punishment. There may be a legitimate diversity of opinion even among Catholics about waging war and applying the death penalty, but not however with regard to abortion and euthanasia.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* 32. Prudential judgment is also needed in applying moral principles to specific policy choices in areas such as armed conflict, housing, health care, immigration, and others. This does not mean that all choices are equally valid, or that our guidance and that of other Church leaders is just another political opinion or policy preference among many others. Rather, we urge Catholics to listen carefully to the Church's teachers when we apply Catholic social teaching to specific proposals and situations. The judgments and recommendations that we make as bishops on such specific issues do not carry the same moral authority as statements of universal moral teachings. [i.e. Life, Marriage, Freedom]

While universal moral principles are non-negotiable, policy issues involving many contingencies and various possible means of achievement are politically **Negotiable Issues**. Individuals of good will can disagree regarding the best means to achieve the policy goal.

[<More Information on Negotiables>](#)

A. War and Peace

CCC 2307 The fifth commandment forbids the intentional destruction of human life. Because of the evils and injustices that accompany all war, the Church insistently urges everyone to prayer and to action so that the divine Goodness may free us from the ancient bondage of war. (Cf. Second Vatican Council *Gaudium et spes* 81, 4)

CCC 2308 All citizens and all governments are obliged to work for the avoidance of war. However, "as long as the danger of war persists and there is no international authority with the necessary competence and power, governments cannot be denied the right of lawful self-defense, once all peace efforts have failed." (*GS* 79, 4)

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2016 Democratic Platform

We support the nuclear agreement with Iran because, if vigorously enforced and implemented, it verifiably cuts off all of Iran's pathways to a bomb without resorting to war. (p.43)

2016 Republican Platform

We consider the Administration's deal with Iran, to lift international sanctions and make hundreds of billions of dollars available to the Mullahs, a personal agreement between the President and his negotiating partners and non-binding on the next president...Because of it, the defiant and emboldened regime in Tehran continues to sponsor terrorism across the region, develop a nuclear weapon, test-re ballistic missiles inscribed with "Death to Israel," and abuse the basic human rights of its citizens. (p.46)

2016 Libertarian Platform

American foreign policy should seek an America at peace with the world. Our foreign policy should emphasize defense against attack from abroad and enhance the likelihood of peace by avoiding foreign entanglements. We would end the current U.S. government policy of foreign intervention, including military and economic aid. We recognize the right of all people to resist tyranny and defend themselves and their rights. We condemn the use of force, and especially the use of terrorism, against the innocent, regardless of whether such acts are committed by governments or by political or revolutionary groups.

2016 Green Party Platform

Our first priority in foreign policy considerations is to creating a future without war. We are committed that future generations not face the separations and sacrifices of war.

We recommend the following actions: ... Support a transparent and democratic conscientious objection process free of harassment, imprisonment, or deployment to war zones for conscientious objectors. Defend the right of individuals in the military service to modify or completely separate from military involvement because of conscientious objection.

B. Capital Punishment

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2267 Assuming that the guilty party's identity and responsibility have been fully determined, the traditional teaching of the Church does not

exclude recourse to the death penalty, if this is the only possible way of effectively defending human lives against an unjust aggressor.

If, however, non-lethal means are sufficient to defend and protect people's safety from the aggressor, authority should limit itself to such means, as these are more in keeping with the concrete conditions of the common good and more in conformity with the dignity of the human person.

Today, in fact, as a consequence of the possibilities which the state has for effectively preventing crime, by rendering one who has committed an offense incapable of doing harm - without definitively taking away from him the possibility of redeeming himself - the cases in which the execution of the offender is an absolute necessity 'are very rare, if not practically non-existent.' (Pope St. John Paul II, *Encyclical Evangelium vitae* 56)

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2016 Democratic Platform

We will abolish the death penalty, which has proven to be a cruel and unusual form of punishment. It has no place in the United States of America. The application of the death penalty is arbitrary and unjust. The cost to taxpayers far exceeds those of life imprisonment. It does not deter crime. And, exonerations show a dangerous lack of reliability for what is an irreversible punishment. (p. 16)

2016 Republican Platform

The constitutionality of the death penalty is firmly settled by its explicit mention in the Fifth Amendment. With the murder rate soaring in our great cities, we condemn the Supreme Court's erosion of the right of the people to enact capital punishment in their states. (p. 40)

2016 Libertarian Platform

We oppose the administration of the death penalty by the state.

2016 Green Platform

[We] Oppose the death penalty in the United States and worldwide.

C. Economic Policy

Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical *Centesimus Annus* 35. . . . [I]t is right to speak of a struggle against an economic system, if the latter is understood as a method of upholding the absolute predominance of capital, the possession of the means of production and of the land, in contrast to the free and personal nature of human work. In the struggle against such a system, what is being proposed as an alternative is not the socialist system, which in fact turns out to be State capitalism, but rather *a society of free work, of enterprise and of participation*. Such a society is not directed against the market, but demands that the market be appropriately controlled by the forces of society and by the State, so as to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole of society are satisfied. . . . We have seen that it is unacceptable to say that the defeat of so-called *Real Socialism* leaves capitalism as the only model of economic organization.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* 75. Welfare policy should reduce poverty and dependency, strengthen family life, and help families leave poverty through work, training, and assistance with child care, health care, housing, and transportation. Given the link between family stability and economic success, welfare policy should address both the economic and cultural factors that contribute to family breakdown. It should also provide a safety net for those who cannot work.

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2016 Democratic Platform

Democrats believe we are stronger when we have an economy that works for everyone—an economy that grows incomes for working people, creates good-paying jobs, and puts a middleclass life within reach for more Americans. Democrats believe we can spur more sustainable economic growth, which will create good-paying jobs and raise wages. And we can have more economic fairness, so the rewards are shared broadly, not just with those at the top. . . . We believe that today’s extreme level of income and wealth inequality—where the majority of the economic gains go to the top one percent and the richest 20 people in our country own more wealth than the bottom 150 million—makes our economy weaker, our communities poorer, and our politics poisonous. (p.1)

2016 Republican Platform

The Republican path to fiscal sanity and economic expansion begins with a constitutional requirement for a federal balanced budget... Republican budgets will prioritize thrift over extravagance and put taxpayers first. (p. 23)

2016 Libertarian Platform

Libertarians want all members of society to have abundant opportunities to achieve economic success. A free and competitive market allocates resources in the most efficient manner. Each person has the right to offer goods and services to others on the free market. The only proper role of government in the economic realm is to protect property rights, adjudicate disputes, and provide a legal framework in which voluntary trade is protected. All efforts by government to redistribute wealth, or to control or manage trade, are improper in a free society.

2016 Green Platform

Our current economic system is gravely flawed. It is unjust and unsustainable because it is premised on endless economic growth and destruction of nature. Our market economy, by externalizing the environmental and social costs of greenhouse gas emissions, is creating the greatest market failure in history: climate change, and its devastating effects. Our government's top economic goal — increasing Gross Domestic Product — impels us to perpetually intensify our resource use and environmental destruction.

D. Health Care

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2211 The political community has a duty to honor the family, to assist it, and to ensure especially: . . .

- in keeping with the country's institutions, the right to medical care, assistance for the aged, and family benefits;
- the protection of security and health, especially with respect to dangers like drugs, pornography, alcoholism, etc.;

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship* 80. Affordable and accessible health care is an essential safeguard of human life and a fundamental human right. Despite an increase in the number of people insured, millions of Americans still lack health care coverage. Health care coverage remains an urgent national priority. The nation's health care system needs to be rooted in values that respect human dignity, protect human life, respect the principle of subsidiarity, and meet the needs of the poor and uninsured, especially born and unborn children, pregnant women, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations. Employers, including religious groups and

family-owned businesses, should be able to provide health care without compromising their moral or religious convictions, and individuals should be able to purchase health care that accords with their faith.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services (5th Edition)* 11. A just health care system will be concerned both with promoting equity of care—to assure that the right of each person to basic health care is respected—and with promoting the good health of all in the community. The responsible stewardship of health care resources can be accomplished best in dialogue with people from all levels of society, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and with respect for the moral principles that guide institutions and persons.

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2016 Democratic Platform

We are going to fight to make sure every American has access to quality, affordable health care. We will tackle the problems that remain in our health care system, including cracking down on runaway prescription drug prices and addressing mental health with the same seriousness that we treat physical health. We will fight Republican efforts to roll back the clock on women’s health and reproductive rights, and stand up for Planned Parenthood. (p.34)

Democrats are committed to protecting and advancing reproductive health, rights, and justice. We believe unequivocally, like the majority of Americans, that every woman should have access to quality reproductive health care services, including safe and legal abortion—regardless of where she lives, how much money she makes, or how she is insured. . . . We will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers, which provide critical health services to millions of people. We will continue to oppose—and seek to overturn—federal and state laws and policies that impede a woman’s access to abortion, including by repealing the Hyde Amendment. We condemn and will combat any acts of violence, harassment, and intimidation of reproductive health providers, patients, and staff. We will defend the ACA, which extends affordable preventive health care to women, including no cost contraception, and prohibits discrimination in health care based on gender. (p.37)

We will support sexual and reproductive health and rights around the globe. In addition to expanding the availability of affordable family planning information and contraceptive

supplies, we believe that safe abortion must be part of comprehensive maternal and women's health care and included as part of America's global health programming. Therefore, we support the repeal of harmful restrictions that obstruct women's access to health care information and services, including the "global gag rule" and the Helms Amendment that bars American assistance to provide safe, legal abortion throughout the developing world. (p.46)

2016 Republican Platform

We respect the states' authority and flexibility to exclude abortion providers from federal programs such as Medicaid and other healthcare and family planning programs so long as they continue to perform or refer for elective abortions or sell the body parts of aborted children. (p.24)

Any honest agenda for improving healthcare must start with repeal of the dishonestly named Affordable Care Act of 2010: Obamacare. It weighs like the dead hand of the past upon American medicine. It imposed a Euro-style bureaucracy to manage its unworkable, budget-busting, conflicting provisions. It has driven up prices for all consumers. Their insurance premiums have dramatically increased while their deductibles have risen about eight times faster than wages in the last ten years. It drove up drug prices by levying a \$27 billion tax on manufacturers and importers and, through mandated price cuts for drugs under Medicare and Medicaid, forced pharmaceutical companies to raise prices for everyone else. Its "silver plans," the most common option on the government insurance exchanges, limit people's access to their own doctor through narrow networks and restrict drug coverage, forcing many patients to pay for extremely costly medicines for their chronic diseases. . . . We agree with the four dissenting judges of the Supreme Court: "In our view, the entire Act before us is invalid in its entirety." It must be removed and replaced with an approach based on genuine competition, patient choice, excellent care, wellness, and timely access to treatment. (p.36)

We must recover the traditional patient-physician relationship based on mutual trust, informed consent, and confidentiality. To simplify the system for both patients and providers, we will reduce mandates and enable insurers and providers of care to increase healthcare options and contain costs. Our goal is to ensure that all Americans have improved access to affordable, high-quality healthcare, including those struggling with mental illness. (p.36)

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 wellbeing of women, and we stand firmly against it. (p.36)

America's healthcare professionals should not be forced to choose between following their faith and practicing their profession. We respect the rights of conscience of healthcare professionals, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and organizations, especially the faith-based groups which provide a major portion of care for the nation and the needy. 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 support the right of parents to determine the proper medical treatment and therapy for their minor children. We support the right of parents to consent to medical treatment for their minor children and urge enactment of legislation that would require parental consent for their daughter to be transported across state lines for abortion. Providers should not be permitted to unilaterally withhold services because a patient's life is deemed not worth living. American taxpayers should not be forced to fund abortion. As Democrats abandon this four decade-old bipartisan consensus, we call for codification of the Hyde Amendment and its application across the government, including Obamacare. We call for a permanent ban on federal funding and subsidies for abortion and healthcare plans that include abortion coverage. (p.37)

2016 Libertarian Platform

We favor a free-market health care system. We recognize the freedom of individuals to determine the level of health insurance they want (if any), the level of health care they want, the care providers they want, the medicines and treatments they will use and all other aspects of their medical care, including end-of-life decisions. People should be free to purchase health insurance across state lines.

2016 Green Party Platform

The Green Party supports single-payer universal health care and preventive care for all. We believe that health care is a right, not a privilege.

Under a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health care system, the administrative waste of private insurance corporations would be redirected to patient care. If the United States were to shift to a system of universal coverage and a single payer plan, as in Canada and many European countries, the savings in administrative costs would be more than enough to offset the cost of additional care.

All workers must have health care coverage, at least half paid by employer, until the passage of universal health care.

Funds must be allocated for expanded scientific research into safer and more effective birth control techniques and devices. We demand better-than-adequate health care for women and children — especially prenatal care. . . . There must be access to free birth control

devices, information counseling, and clinics to all who desire them. We call for implementation of family planning education for both genders in all levels of the state school system.

E. Immigration

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2241 The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the foreigner in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him. Political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible, may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical conditions, especially with regard to the immigrants' duties toward their country of adoption. Immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens.

Pope St. John Paul II, Address to the Congress on the Pastoral Care of Migrants (9 October 1998). Immigration is a complex question, which concerns not only individuals searching for more secure and dignified living conditions, but also the population of the host countries. . . . Christians are asked to assume their responsibilities in the Church and in society with greater clarity and determination. As citizens of an immigrant country who know the demands of their faith, believers must show that Christ's Gospel is at the service of the welfare and the freedom of all God's children.

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2016 Democratic Platform

The Democratic Party supports legal immigration, within reasonable limits, that meets the needs of families, communities, and the economy as well as maintains the United States' role as a beacon of hope for people seeking safety, freedom, and security. People should come to the 17 United States with visas and not through smugglers. Yet, we recognize that the current immigration system is broken. (pp. 16-17)

More than 11 million people are living in the shadows, without proper documentation.... Democrats believe we need to urgently fix our broken immigration system—which tears families apart and keeps workers in the shadows.... We believe immigration

enforcement must be humane and consistent with our values. We should prioritize those who pose a threat to the safety of our communities, not hardworking families who are contributing to their communities. (p. 17)

2016 Republican Platform

America's immigration policy must serve the national interest of the United States, and the interests of American workers must be protected over the claims of foreign nationals seeking the same jobs. With all our fellow citizens, we have watched, in anger and disgust, the mocking of our immigration laws by a president who made himself superior to the will of the nation. We stand with the victims of his policies, especially the families of murdered innocents. Illegal immigration endangers everyone, exploits the taxpayers, and insults all who aspire to enter America legally. We oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by breaking the law, have disadvantaged those who have obeyed it. The executive amnesties of 2012 and 2014 are a direct violation of federal law and usurp the powers of Congress as outlined in Article I of the Constitution. These unlawful amnesties must be immediately rescinded by a Republican president. In a time of terrorism, drug cartels, human trafficking, and criminal gangs, the presence of millions of unidentified individuals in this country poses grave risks to the safety and sovereignty of the United States. Our highest priority, therefore, must be to secure our borders and all ports of entry and to enforce our immigration laws. (pp. 25-26)

2016 Libertarian Platform

We support the removal of governmental impediments to free trade. Political freedom and escape from tyranny demand that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries. Economic freedom demands the unrestricted movement of human as well as financial capital across national borders. However, we support control over the entry into our country of foreign nationals who pose a credible threat to security, health or property.

2016 Green Platform

[I]t must be acknowledged that the trigger for such an influx of immigrants in this country has been largely due to unfair US trade policies. ... Any immigration policy should be seen a way to address all people's humanitarian needs as we undo the damage to local communities and chart a course toward sustainable local economies.

The Green Party stands firmly for social justice for all those living in this country regardless of their immigration status. Above all, policy and law must be humane. Anything less would be inconsistent with our Green Values, and with our nation's values.

The Green Party accepts as a goal a world in which persons can freely choose to live in and work in any county he or she desires.

F. Environment

Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* 42. ... the dominion granted to man by the Creator is not an absolute power, nor can one speak of a freedom to 'use and misuse,' or to dispose of things as one pleases. The limitation imposed from the beginning by the Creator himself and expressed symbolically by the prohibition not to 'eat of the fruit of the tree' (cf. Gen 2:16-17) shows clearly enough that, when it comes to the natural world, we are subject not only to biological laws but also to moral ones, which cannot be violated with impunity" .

Pope Francis, *Inaugural Mass* (19 March 2013). I would like to ask all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life, and all men and women of goodwill: let us be 'protectors' of creation, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment.

Pope Francis, Encyclical *Laudato Si'* 60. [W]e need to acknowledge that different approaches and lines of thought have emerged regarding this situation and its possible solutions. At one extreme, we find those who doggedly uphold the myth of progress and tell us that ecological problems will solve themselves simply with the application of new technology and without any need for ethical considerations or deep change. At the other extreme are those who view men and women and all their interventions as no more than a threat, jeopardizing the global ecosystem, and consequently the presence of human beings on the planet should be reduced and all forms of intervention prohibited. Viable future scenarios will have to be generated between these extremes, since there is no one path to a solution. This makes a variety of proposals possible, all capable of entering into dialogue with a view to developing comprehensive solutions.

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2016 Democratic Platform

Climate change is an urgent threat and a defining challenge of our time...We believe America must be running entirely on clean energy by mid-century. (p. 27)

2016 Republican Platform

We firmly believe environmental problems are best solved by giving incentives for human ingenuity and the development of new technologies, not through top-down, command-and-control regulations that stifle economic growth and cost thousands of jobs. (p. 22)

Conservation is inherent in conservatism. As the pioneer of environmentalism a century ago, the Republican Party reaffirms the moral obligation to be good stewards of the God-given natural beauty and resources of our country. We believe that people are the most valuable resources and that human health and safety are the proper measurements of a policy's success. We assert that private ownership has been the best guarantee of conscientious stewardship, while some of the worst instances of degradation have occurred under government control. Poverty, not wealth, is the gravest threat to the environment, while steady economic growth brings the technological advances which make environmental progress possible.

The environment is too important to be left to radical environmentalists. (pp. 20-21)

2016 Libertarian Platform

Competitive free markets and property rights stimulate the technological innovations and behavioral changes required to protect our environment and ecosystems. Private landowners and conservation groups have a vested interest in maintaining natural resources. Governments are unaccountable for damage done to our environment and have a terrible track record when it comes to environmental protection. Protecting the environment requires a clear definition and enforcement of individual rights and responsibilities regarding resources like land, water, air, and wildlife. Where damages can be proven and quantified in a court of law, restitution to the injured parties must be required.

2016 Green Platform

The human community is an element of the Earth community, not the other way around. ... Climate change is the gravest environmental, social and economic peril that humanity has ever met.

The Green Party supports a holistic approach to justice, recognizing that environmental justice, social justice and economic justice depend on and support each other. We believe that no one — including people of color and the poor — should be poisoned nor subjected to harmful levels of toxic chemicals and that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the pollution from industrial, governmental and commercial sources or policies.