

PLATFORM OF THE ILLINOIS GREEN PARTY

2018

As Adopted by Membership Vote, March 2018

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PREAMBLE

The Illinois Green Party (ILGP) is a voluntary association of individuals committed to advancing the principles and purposes of the global Green movement. It is the political expression of that movement in the State of Illinois and is an affiliate of the Green Party of the United States (GPUS). As a political party, it is active on the electoral field, running and/or endorsing candidates for office and supporting legislative and other political measures that are consistent with its principles and objectives. Consistent with the Green view of politics, it also embraces other forms of political activism, including support for

various non-electoral movements that aim to advance the interests of labor, human rights, peace, social justice and the environment.

This is the political platform of the Illinois Green Party. It advances positive recommendations for progressive change in Illinois and the United States on a number of vital issues. Each platform position reflects the Illinois Green Party's commitment to and agreement with the Ten Key Values of the Green Movement and of the GPUS. The platform also demonstrates our belief in the inherent worth of all human persons and their rights as laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The Universal Declaration is attached to this Platform as an appendix, to serve as a reminder of how far our nation has yet to go to meet the standards set forth in this powerful statement of our best aspirations as a species.

THE TEN KEY VALUES OF THE GREEN PARTY

1. Ecological Wisdom

The Greens recognize that the Earth sustains all life processes. Green ecology moves beyond environmentalism by understanding the common roots of the abuse of people. Whatever we do to the web of life, we do to ourselves.

2. Social Justice

Greens want to replace the worldwide system of poverty and injustice with a world free of all oppression based on class, gender, race, citizenship, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

3. Grassroots Democracy

The powerless suffer the most from resource depletion and toxic pollution. Greens believe in direct participation by all people in the environmental, political, and economic decisions that affect their lives.

4. Nonviolence

Greens reject violence as a way of settling disputes it is shortsighted, morally wrong, and ultimately self-defeating. We are working to create a world where war is obsolete. We believe in the right to self-defense.

5. Decentralization

Power and responsibility must be restored to local communities within an overall framework of ecologically sound and socially just values and lifestyles. We believe in peoples' right of self-determination.

6. Community-Based Economics

Greens seek a new economics that is based upon the natural limits of the Earth, and which meets the basic needs of everyone on the planet, under democratic, localized community control.

7. Feminism

The Green movement is profoundly inspired by feminist values. The ethics of cooperation and understanding must replace the values of domination and control over others.

8. Respect for Diversity

Greens honor the biological diversity of the Earth and the cultural, sexual, and spiritual diversity of Earth's people. We aim to reclaim this country's finest ideals: popular democracy, the dignity of the individual, and liberty and justice for all.

9. Personal and Global Responsibility

Greens demonstrate a commitment to global sustainability and international justice through political solidarity and in personal lifestyles based on self-sufficiency and living lightly.

10. Future Focus

Greens seek a society where the interests of seven generations from now are considered equal to the interests of the present generation. We must reclaim the future for our children and ourselves.

A. THE PROPER ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND WHY WE SEEK TO GOVERN

The Preamble to the Constitution of the State of Illinois states that our government was formed “to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the people . . . eliminate poverty and inequality; assure legal, social and economic justice [and] provide opportunity for the fullest development of the individual.”

The Illinois Green Party agrees that these are basic obligations of government and we are committed to achieving these goals. It follows from this mission statement that the kind of government we seek to build when elected, is one dedicated to:

- Protecting and restoring health to the planetary eco-system on which all life depends, which must include rapid major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate climate change; providing fulfilling employment opportunities for every able-bodied adult, at an income level that is at least adequate to support a family with a modicum of comfort and dignity;
- Ensuring the healthy development of, and quality educational opportunities for, every child, so that every child has a full and equal opportunity to thrive and achieve his or her full potential;
- Providing a high level of quality care for all of our brothers and sisters who are elderly and/or too disabled to work;
- Ensuring that all members of society have access to healthy food, clean water and air, housing and health care;
- Ensuring that our uses of energy, soil, water and natural resources are efficient and sustainable, so as not to impose harm or privation on future generations;
- Ensuring that the human rights and civil liberties embodied in our federal and State constitutions, and in other documents that speak to human aspirations of freedom and liberty, and the rights of working people to organize, are protected and promoted; and
- Providing and promoting peace and domestic tranquility.

While this is a broad statement of goals, it is vital to remind ourselves, and inform those considering supporting us, of what we aspire to achieve in office.

For decades, much of the corporate elite in the United States has engaged in a non-stop effort to persuade the American people that government itself is evil, that it is itself a major part of what ails us, and that it is in their best interest to shrink government, at all levels. They have persuaded many that “over-taxation” and “over-regulation” constrain the real “job creators” in the private sector. They have propagated the ideas that government should be “run like a business,” and that it should serve as a conduit for the increasing privatization of public functions, sometimes under the guise of “public-private partnerships” and other innocuous labels.

We reject such notions. Government itself is neither good nor evil. Its outcomes are the product of those who control it. When the corporate elite use massive campaign contributions, funneled through both corporate-sponsored parties, to elect people to office who have a harmful agenda, then evil government becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. But that does not prove that government itself is inherently evil. What it proves is that we, the people, need to wrest control of government from those who use it for destructive or selfish purposes.

As for the claimed virtues of shrinking government, this is a cynical exercise, in which those trying to prove that government “doesn’t work” impose austere budgets aimed at bringing about that very result. Having engineered that result, they then point to government’s lagging performance as “proof” that the solution lies with more privatization of public functions.

We recognize the “privatization” trend for what it is: An attempt by certain corporate powers to expand the sphere of profiteering through corporate welfare and feeding at the public trough. The experience of “privatization” has generally been that taxpayers get the worst of both worlds – they pay to support a bureaucracy to police the contractors, and they subsidize the contractors’ profits, while typically getting lower quality service provided by underpaid and under-trained workers.

The harm that has been caused by the systematic dismantling of the public sector is no theoretical construct but lived reality. Government has been shrinking, to the point where it cannot adequately perform its core functions and we are feeling the effects. Shrinking the size of government has obviously not led to stronger employment or economic health.

Government itself is not the problem. To the contrary, it is the most promising vehicle for effecting solutions when it is out from under corporate control. We support restoration of a healthy public sector, in those areas of the economy where public ownership and control of the economy is appropriate such as transportation, communication, water, power and other infrastructure, health care, education and most social services. This will allow us to directly achieve full employment at living wages or better, while improving our quality of life.

We have great need to modernize our housing, energy and transportation infrastructure in order to promote energy efficiency, clean renewable energy and sustainable transportation. We need new or restored parks, libraries, water purification facilities and schools. Our schools and universities need more educators. There is a crying need for social work - drug and alcohol rehabilitation, prison reform

and rehabilitation, adult education, job placement, parenting education and prenatal care, child care, public health, elderly care, care for those with disabilities, and more. Investments in education and human services pay off in the long run, as they reduce the social costs of crime, poverty and disease. We could be restoring forests, wetlands, farmlands and urban gardens, creating carbon sinks and restoring natural eco-systems to help combat global climate change.

At the same time as we have such a long list of unmet social needs, we have millions of unemployed and underemployed workers. Government can, and must, be the tool that puts “two and two together,” moving us toward the goal of a full employment economy.

A healthy public sector in the areas of infrastructure, education, health care and social services, is essential to support a genuinely healthy private sector. When businesses are supported by a healthy and well-educated work force, when energy costs are kept affordable, when workers can get to work on time, well rested, through efficient transportation systems, they are better able to operate productively. “Privatization” may help individual profiteers but it is not good for the economy as a whole.

The goal of restoring health to the public sector suggests other policy choices that can move us toward our economic goals. These include:

- A Real Peace Dividend. We need a federal government devoted to meeting human needs, not militarism and war. Our military should be for protecting the nation, not dominating the globe. We will fight to dismantle the military-industrial complex and free hundreds of billions of dollars to promote the real foundation of a healthy economy.
- A “Green New Deal” to promote energy efficiency, conservation renewable energy and sustainable transportation – to eliminate our dependency on fossil fuels and combat global warming. The promotion of solar, wind, biomass and geothermal energy will create hundreds of thousands of new manufacturing, construction and service jobs and generate new sources of farm income. New energy-efficiency standards and conservation measures will drive energy bills down, leading to more savings for businesses and consumers. New high-speed rail and modernized public transit will not only reduce traffic congestion; they will create more jobs than equivalent spending on more roads.
- A Medicare-for-all, single-payer health-care system. This would not only fulfill a basic government obligation to meet the essential needs of its people; it would also be a boon to our economy, as both businesses and consumers would be relieved of the crippling burden of paying for overpriced, wasteful private health insurance.
- Increased Support for Education. Education is an essential building block for economic health. Quality primary and secondary schools and quality higher education should not be reserved for the wealthiest Americans; they should be accessible and affordable to all. Indeed, one objective should be to make higher education free to all who academically qualify. The short-term cost to the public will be paid back by long-term gain. It has been proved time and again that education is the best “investment” government can make, paying back every dollar spent several times over.

These, and other federal, state and local policies needed to meet the government's basic obligations to the people, are not new, and they already enjoy widespread support among the people of our country and our state. The solutions to our problems are no secret. They are well known. The problem is that the voters, not perceiving much difference in the candidates of the corporate parties, or not knowing there is a better choice, continue to elect people to office who do not represent their best interests or who campaign on promises but don't deliver. That is exactly why the Green Party is necessary: We represent the will of the majority – and provide the pathway to a better state, nation and world. These are not empty promises for us. This is our platform.

B. SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE ECONOMICS

We aim to build a new type of economy in which the major decisions regarding the production and distribution of wealth are made democratically by the people. The workers who produce society's wealth should be in control of their economic activity, not controlled by it. Communities should be empowered to share resources and ensure their economic security and self-sufficiency. To achieve these goals, fundamental changes must be made to the structure of our economy. Specifically, we must move to end the domination of our economy by large transnational corporations and the tiny minority of wealthy individuals who control those corporations.

As a form of business ownership, the corporation, at least as it exists today, is in conflict with the ideals of representative democracy, and social and environmental responsibility and accountability. By definition, a "corporation" is a legal fiction –a business entity or organization that (by an 1886 U. S. Supreme Court decision) has been given “rights” comparable to those of human beings, yet does not have the same legal responsibilities as human beings. The corporation was created in order to facilitate the rapid expansion of capital and, at the same time, insulate the profiteering owners from legal liability.

While originally subject to strict regulation under state charter, corporations over the years have eroded these social controls and now exert much more control over governments than governments exert control over them. Even in his day, Abraham Lincoln warned:

“I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country . . . corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed.”
Letter to William Elkin, Nov. 21, 1864

Today, Lincoln's prophecy has come true in every respect but the complete destruction of our Republic – and that outcome is well underway. Today a mere handful of corporations completely dominate the principal news and information media. Corporate money, power and influence almost completely dominate our government – with the Green Party now being the most practical channel of resistance. Our government today is less a Republic than it is an increasingly authoritarian plutocracy, a system of rule by the wealthiest.

Our criticism of corporations does not mean or imply that all corporations are evil or that all persons who participate in corporations are evil. We acknowledge that many good and socially responsible

business owners choose to incorporate because that option is encouraged by our laws and system of taxation. Some corporations do make a good-faith effort to act in a socially responsible fashion. The basic good-will of human beings is not always overcome by narrow self-interest.

However, even granting the best of intentions, an economic system dominated by giant corporations that have overcome social controls is antagonistic to the public interest and the goal of a healthy and sustainable economy. That's because, by definition and purpose, a corporation is a business entity that absolves its owners of personal liability. It is obligated by law to serve the interests of its shareholders. This means that most corporations will do whatever will maximize profits in the short term, even if that means despoiling the environment, destroying jobs and communities, profiteering from war, or otherwise creating social harm. These amoral institutions have no loyalty to any community or nation, or concern for the fate of the planet.

Corporate domination of our economy is at the root of many societal problems. The compulsion to beat competitors and maximize profits leads many corporations to chase after the lowest possible labor costs; so they freely close up shop in our communities and shift production to poorer countries whose governments repress labor and impose below-poverty wages and inhumane working conditions. The same compulsion drives most corporations to deliberately engage in industrial practices that shortsightedly use up the planet's resources at a reckless pace, and keep their costs of production low by ignoring or downplaying environmental concerns, as well as workers' safety and health.

Corporate domination of our economy not only keeps millions of U. S. citizens in "official" poverty but also has driven tens of millions of working people into a more insidious form of poverty. These workers have marginal, low-wage jobs with no health insurance. They can't afford to raise a family at all, or can do so only by working two jobs, working long, exhausting hours, keeping two or more family members employed at once, going into debt — or all of the above.

Poverty and economic insecurity, in turn, breed domestic conflict, drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse and neglect, and crime. While these root causes of "crime in the streets" remain unaddressed, corporate crime, or "crime in the suites," goes largely unacknowledged, and the corporate criminals get away with practices that literally kill working people by the thousands by dumping toxins and carcinogens into our environment, creating unsafe products and coercing workers into working under unsafe working conditions.

On the political field, the same corporate interests have stifled genuine political democracy by using their tremendous wealth to buy politicians of the Democratic and Republican parties, thereby controlling government policies at the federal, state, and, to some extent, even the local level. Indeed, throughout Illinois, we have the sad spectacle of communities so desperate for jobs that they compete with one another in begging contests to have prisons built in their particular towns, or compete with one another by offering tax giveaways and other incentives to lure corporations to build facilities in their particular towns, to the detriment of municipal governments, workers and taxpayers as a whole. State and national governments compete with one another in the same fashion, in a "race to the bottom."

At the state and national levels, corporate domination of government has led to the massive waste of society's wealth on "corporate welfare" — the practice of granting billions of dollars' worth of special subsidies, use permits, tax breaks and other special favors to corporations, at public expense.

Meanwhile, corporations have steadily eroded the regulatory controls that have at least checked their worst practices. Today there are very few legal obstacles that interfere with corporations exploiting workers to the hilt, literally killing them by subjecting them to unsafe working conditions, plundering and poisoning the environment, defrauding or cheating consumers, and other gross misconduct. Efforts to regulate such destructive practices have been subverted by corporations getting their own representatives appointed to controlling positions in the regulatory agencies themselves, and by the practice of offering lucrative jobs to regulators, in what is known as the “revolving door” between regulatory agencies and the companies they are supposed to be regulating.

Corporate domination of our media strongly affects how many people think about the economy. To the corporate media, the "health" of the economy is measured by how fast the economy is expanding, how well the stock market is doing, and the size of corporate profits. To the Illinois Green Party, the true measure of a healthy economy is how well it is meeting the needs of the people, and especially of the working people who actually create society's wealth. Recognizing the root causes of our economic problems is the first step toward solving them and meeting the larger goals outlined above. Since domination of our economy by exploiting, out-of-control corporations is at the root of the problem, we must: a) take steps to reassert social controls over corporate behavior, through chartering and other laws, so as to minimize or eliminate socially and environmentally harmful conduct, or b) either ban the corporate form of business organization altogether, or allow it only under limited, carefully controlled circumstances, and c) promote and favor alternatives to the corporate model, including small community-based business, worker-owned enterprises and workers' cooperatives.

Steps a) and b) can be advanced by supporting efforts to amend the U. S. Constitution as follows:

- to limit constitutional rights to natural persons only, eliminating the concept of corporate “personhood”,
- to empower federal, state, and local governments to regulate campaign contributions and expenditures, including a candidate's own contributions and expenditures,
- to ensure that all citizens, regardless of their economic status, have access to the political process, and
- to bar the judiciary from treating the spending of money to influence elections as protected “speech” under the First Amendment.

The ILGP and its Members will continue to support movements and organizations that seek to accomplish these goals.

We the people allowed the creation of corporations in the first instance, and we retain the right to halt their operation altogether, or to require that they be permitted to exist and operate only if they agree to commit no environmental harm, engage in no socially destructive behavior, pay a living wage to their employees, do not abandon communities that have benefited them, pledge not to engage in political speech or interfere in the political process, and agree to such other restrictions as we deem fit.

The objective of building alternatives to the corporate model can be advanced by providing tax credits and low interest loans to community-based businesses, worker-owned enterprises and workers'

cooperatives, and by more far-reaching means – such as helping workers acquire industrial plants or other production facilities when their owners want to shut them down, or relocate them. The power of eminent domain is sometimes abused by government to condemn land or even people’s homes to advance the building goals of a corporation that may be against the will of the public. In the hands of a Green government, the same tool could be used for its intended purpose of advancing the public good – for example, to condemn, take over and refurbish abandoned factories and other facilities in order to save workers’ jobs and create renewed economic opportunity.

In general, the Illinois Green Party and its candidates will succeed in meeting the economic and social goals set forth in the Preamble to the Illinois Constitution because we are committed to such goals as a matter of principle, consistent with our Ten Key Values. We will not “sell out” these principles, because we refuse campaign contributions from corporations and will not be bought. We rely on the grass-roots support of the working people that we intend to serve. Where the Democratic and Republican parties spend millions of dollars to deceive and manipulate the people, we take our direction from the people. A vote for the Illinois Green Party is a vote for a healthy economy, with fulfilling and rewarding jobs for all who need them. It is a vote to empower people and protect the environment, a vote to put human needs before profits and to make government an instrument that serves the interests of the many, not the wealthy few.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

One of the hallmarks of the Green Party is its devotion to Ecological Wisdom and protecting the long-term environmental health and sustainability of the Earth. Before adopting a policy or position on any issue, we must always consider and weigh the environmental impact. A holistic and sustainable approach to our relationship with this planet and all life that it supports must be one of reverence and respect, not one that views the Earth merely as an object to be conquered, exploited or subjugated to the will of humans.

We are living at a crossroads in human history. In the last 50 years, human society has begun to have a major impact on the global environment, as evidenced by the problems of global warming and climate chaos, the destruction of the ozone layer, the wholesale destruction of rain forests, the dispersal of dioxins and related chemicals into the environment, and the general deterioration of the quality of our air, water and land. Our health and the health of other living things have already been compromised by the pervasive presence of toxic chemicals, radioactive waste and pesticides. Meanwhile, new challenges are arising, such as the threat posed by giant agribusiness corporations that are attempting to manipulate and control the genetic makeup of our food supplies. Society is at a crucial turning point: Will we as a species develop the wisdom and means to halt and reverse these trends, or will we continue to muddle through as we have adopting weak regulatory measures that are repeatedly watered down or poorly enforced under pressure from big business?

Our future depends on our ability to make major changes, not just in policy, but also in our whole philosophy of government. That is one of the major reasons why the Illinois Green Party is needed, and why it must play a continually increasing role in government. Most of the threats to our environment are global in character and will require global solutions. However, Illinoisans can play an important

role in effecting change, not only by sending Green representatives to Washington, but by attacking at least some of these problems at the state and regional levels.

Some of our proposals for protecting and improving the environment are found in other sections of our platform, including the sections on Transportation, Energy Policy and Agriculture. In addition, one important policy change that could be adopted at the state level is the introduction of a “pollution tax.” One variation of this is a proposed “carbon tax”; however the principle deserves to be applied to more than just carbon emissions. The idea behind the pollution tax is to impose the costs of despoiling the environment on those businesses that are responsible for creating the environmental hazards. Producers of greenhouse gases, ozone-depleting chemicals, dioxins and other toxic and radioactive substances, would be taxed in proportion to the quantity and severity of the emissions. The tax would give polluters an incentive to change their practices and give nonpolluting competitors an edge in the marketplace. Furthermore, the funds raised in this manner could be used to help develop and implement alternative methods of production.

However, taxing the emission of pollutants into our atmosphere and waterways, by itself, is not sufficient. As more and more heavy metals, toxic pesticides, volatile organic compounds, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, dioxins, endocrine disrupters and other toxic and radioactive wastes are allowed to enter our air, water, land, food and ultimately our bodies – it is not enough to reduce the rate at which we are poisoning ourselves. To continue to allow this gradual poisoning of our own environment and our fellow human beings, in any one of these categories, let alone in combination, with its unpredictable synergistic impact, is irrational and intolerable. Every ounce, let alone every ton, of such toxic releases, is tantamount to releasing so many tickets in a death lottery that every human being and every other creature on our planet is forced to play.

Given that protection of public health is a fundamental duty of government, the Green Party supports more aggressive action to reduce and eliminate the production, storage, use and release of toxic chemicals moving rapidly toward a requirement that all industrial production use “closed loop” practices with respect to such substances. We support intensified and independent research into the subject of endocrine disrupters (chemicals that mimic hormones) particularly with regard to dose response relationships and to the possible synergistic effects of endocrine disrupters with each other, and with other compounds and pollutants. We also support more rigorous scrutiny of all potentially endocrine disrupting compounds before these substances are permitted to be placed into the stream of commerce, whether in foods, household products, or industrial items. Proven endocrine disrupters should be banned from the marketplace in the absence of a compelling countervailing interest. Even in those instances, products containing endocrine disrupters should be accompanied by highly visible, strongly worded warnings on their labels.

Such changes, of course, require regulatory agencies that are concerned first and foremost with the health and welfare of the public. We support greater transparency and accountability, as well as a ban on “revolving door” industry participation in such regulatory agencies.

One of the largest contributing sources of dioxin contamination is industrial and medical waste incineration. Direct regulatory measures should be implemented to phase out such incinerators, or at least to eliminate dioxin creating

plastics from the waste stream. Encouraging hospitals to use reusable and re-stabilized supplies, rather than throw-away items, and more careful policing of the waste stream could go a long way toward eliminating Illinois's contribution to the dioxin problem.

Greens support the maxim, “reduce, reuse and recycle” and recognize that this involves both informed, socially responsible lifestyle choices and systemic or policy changes. “Reducing” does not have to entail reduction in the quality of life; it can actually improve the quality of life. What it implies is the elimination of senseless and wasteful practices, such as the mass consumption of throwaway products, planned to have limited life, made from finite resources, without any consideration for where the product came from, how far it traveled, who made it, under what conditions, what it is made from, whether there are any alternatives, and where it is going after being thrown in the trash. The same principle can and should be applied to energy and transportation practices, as outlined elsewhere in this Platform.

Although Illinois has begun to take encouraging steps to promote recycling, much more can be done to expand the scope of recycling and encourage the manufacture, sale, and purchase of reusable products, at both the personal and industrial levels, by using appropriate monetary incentives and disincentives, as well as easier, more available recycling collection and consumer education.

We oppose any commercial timber harvesting or other natural resource extraction on public lands. Our public lands should be made accessible to the public, with the exception of protected wilderness areas. User fees should not be imposed. However, we oppose the expansion of horse trails on the Shawnee National Forest and the push to allow all-terrain vehicles there, and in our state parks, as any such expansion threatens the integrity of the ecosystem.

We call for an improved funding stream for clean water programs, to meet our obligations under the federal Clean Water Act, for the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF), and the Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Fund (OSLAD) in Illinois. We support a statewide wetlands protection program. Metropolitan Chicago and the Metro East region do not meet federal health standards for air quality. The Illinois EPA must prepare and submit plans to attain healthy air quality in these polluted areas. In keeping with our platform on energy policy, we must (1) rapidly phase out old coal-fired plants that continue to emit mercury and other heavy metals and toxins, (2) raise emission standards for vehicles, including diesel, and (3) enact an emissions testing/permitting program for vehicles licensed in Illinois.

The Illinois Green Party stands up for environmental justice. In siting and permitting decisions, government must consider the impact of all pollution sources in a community and must put a halt to the victimization of poor and oppressed communities. Communities that have been victimized already by extraordinary levels of pollutants or toxic or radioactive contamination must be afforded fast and effective protection, fast remediation and intensive healthcare monitoring and care. Indeed, we support a government commitment to medically treat and compensate all workers and residents exposed to and sickened by exposure to toxic or radioactive contamination, and for thorough studies to discover any “clusters” of illness that have occurred. We support the implementation and enforcement of community “right to know” laws.

Where environmental issues arise on any policy question, the Illinois Green Party will consistently support environmental protection over destruction, saving natural ecosystems and endangered species, not risking their demise, and promoting the long-term sustainability of the human race and other living things over corporate capitalism's short-sighted quest for maximum profit.

D. ENERGY POLICY

The twin crises of global climate change and the end of the era of cheap oil demand that our federal and state governments commit public resources, on a scale comparable to that of the New Deal, to (1) developing decentralized and renewable sources of energy, such as wind, solar and geothermal energy, (2) improving our conservation and efficient use of energy in homes and businesses, and (3) promoting sustainable transportation practices, such as high-speed rail, other efficient public transportation and sensible urban planning.

In order to minimize the damage already caused by greenhouse gas emissions and minimize the risks posed by global climate change, the United States (and our own state) should adopt the goal of achieving zero non-natural CO₂ emissions (and near-zero emissions of other greenhouse gases) by the year 2050.

Such a goal is achievable. To a large degree, the technology and the physical, financial and human resources, already exist to attain it. What is lacking is the political will. That's because the corporate stranglehold on our government by big oil, natural gas, coal and automobile conglomerates, the electrical utilities and their allies continues to impede the social progress that our situation demands. Since Greens do not accept corporate money and are not beholden to such interests, getting Greens elected to government to break this political stranglehold is no longer simply a good idea: it is becoming critically important as the global climate crisis and energy crisis intensifies.

In order to meet this goal, in addition to the sustainable transportation priorities discussed in the next section, the Illinois Green Party supports:

1. A ban on extreme extraction – such as hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”), offshore drilling -- and the development and importing of tar sands oil. As more easily recoverable supplies of oil and natural gas have been consumed, the fossil-fuel corporations have turned to more extreme and environmentally hazardous methods of extraction (fracking, offshore drilling, mountaintop removal) and to cruder sources of petroleum that require more refining to get it into usable form (tar sands oil). Fracking is inherently unsafe, risking widespread contamination of water supplies, air pollution, exposure to radiation, a host of health risks to residents and workers, earthquakes and many other problems. The 2011 Deepwater Horizon disaster alone illustrates that the magnitude of the risks attendant to offshore drilling greatly exceed the imagined benefits. The transportation and marketing of tar sands oil makes our nation an accomplice to the criminal despoliation of Native American territory in Canada. All of these technologies consume large amounts of fossil fuels in the process of extracting it. And all of these practices tend to keep our society dependent on the combustion of fossil fuels to meet our energy needs.

2. Green Building Standards: We need to promote the establishment and enforcement of green building codes to promote energy-efficient buildings and a program aimed at providing rapid, substantial assistance for the retrofitting of homes and businesses, with priority going to low-income housing.

3. Raising energy-efficiency requirements for electrical appliances. Although the federal government requires higher energy efficiency in some appliances, much more needs to be done. Both the federal government and Illinois should adopt higher and more comprehensive energy-efficiency standards.
4. Minimizing light pollution without compromising nighttime safety, security, or utility by: (a) using night lighting only when necessary, turning off lights when not needed, and using the correct amount of light for the need; (b) requiring that night-lighting be directed downward, where it is needed, using full cut-off fixtures that control the light well, minimizing glare, light trespass, light pollution, and energy usage; and (c) requiring the use of low-pressure sodium (LPS) or LED light sources whenever possible (including street lighting, parking lot lighting, security lighting, and other applications where color rendering is not critical).
5. Adopting stronger renewable energy standards, requiring utilities to obtain increasing percentages of their power from renewable sources. A renewable energy standard means requiring utilities to obtain a gradually higher percentage of their electricity from renewable sources, with the required percentage raised each year. Although Illinois has recently adopted a renewable energy standard, both our state and federal governments need to set much higher targets, to be met more quickly, with aggressive and strict enforcement. There is no reason why we cannot reach a goal of a completely decentralized, secure, renewable-powered energy grid by 2050 or sooner.
6. Creating economic incentives to promote renewable energy production. These can include subsidies and tax breaks but we would do well to look at Germany's successes in promoting renewable energy – by regulating the prices that utilities must pay to renewable energy producers, essentially locking in a premium rate. The German government has also supported installation of solar and wind systems by offering 10-year interest-free loans, which can be paid off through sale of the electricity generated. Such a program has worked there; we should adopt it here. The State of Illinois also needs to stop catering to utility intransigence and aggressively enforce “net metering” requirements so that users of home-based renewable energy systems hooked up to the grid can sell their excess energy to power companies at retail price.
7. Promoting cooperative and/or public ownership of our energy grid. So-called energy “deregulation” has had an adverse impact on Illinois residents and businesses alike. In the short term, strict regulation of the utility monopolies must be reimposed. In the long term, we must find a better answer. One part of the problem is that energy cooperatives have been legally barred from operating in parts of the State served by Com Ed or Ameren. Allowing them to compete freely with the utility monopolies, and otherwise favoring or promoting energy cooperatives, may be one part of the solution. Another policy option is to promote public utilities, which have worked well at the municipal level in many parts of the State – and may work even better at a statewide level. Either of these options would better serve the public interest and the economy than the status quo. And either option could serve as a vehicle to more quickly promote use of renewable energy sources.
8. Enacting a physical limit on CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions (a “hard cap”) that steadily declines to zero by 2050 or sooner, and/or adopting a fee-and-dividend system to cut such emissions. Any cap should be comprehensive, with no free allowances, no offsets and no international sale or purchase of CO₂ allowances. The revenues generated should be used to subsidize renewable energy, conservation, research and development, and worker and community transition. Under a fee-and-dividend system, gradually increasing fees would be imposed on producers of greenhouse gases, while consumers would receive periodic dividends from the proceeds, with progressively higher dividends going to persons at lower income levels, that would provide protection from energy price hikes and promote a shift in spending in favor of clean energy and energy efficiency. The guiding principle is that the entities causing climate change, imposing terrible costs on society, should start paying for it, thereby creating an incentive for producers to transition to renewable energy and zero-emissions processes, and

for consumers to transition to better-insulated homes, sustainable transportation and more energy-efficient products. This would also create a more level playing field for producers of clean, renewable energy. As economies of scale are created for such production, the price of such energy will fall, and the shift to clean energy will accelerate.

9. Eliminating all subsidies and tax breaks for fossil fuels. We should not be subsidizing our reliance on the very fossil fuels responsible for most global climate chaos.

10. Banning new coal-fired power plants and rapidly phasing out existing plants. It is now clearer than ever that “clean coal” energy production is a delusion. While we should not rule out the possibility of new technological breakthroughs, including development of technologies that do not rely on combustion, the emphasis today must be in promoting proven clean energy technologies, such as solar, wind and geo-thermal energy. Our heavy reliance on coal-burning power plants, both in Illinois and nationally, has not only greatly contributed to global warming; it has also literally killed tens of thousands of victims of air pollution, contaminated lakes and streams with mercury and other toxins, inflicted the misery of asthma on untold thousands of people – and has killed or given black lung to countless miners themselves, due to unsafe conditions in the mines. We also demand that our national and state governments take aggressive action to help displaced coal miners transition into the new growing areas of a Green economy, taking advantage of the tremendous potential of the growing new renewable energy and energy-efficiency industries (wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, Green construction and retrofitting) to create new, well-paying and far safer, jobs. We also demand that coal companies pay for genuine and full restoration, to the extent possible, of land areas already ravaged by mining.

11. Barring the licensing of new nuclear power plants; eliminating all subsidies and tax breaks for nuclear power (including guarantees for nuclear waste disposal, loan guarantees and subsidized insurance). Although some policymakers have pointed to nuclear power as an “answer” to global warming, this would be a “cure” worse than the disease. While the Illinois Green Party does not oppose basic research on any technology, we categorically oppose the building of new nuclear power plants, and call for the rapid phaseout of existing plants, given the present state of nuclear reactor technology. Current forms of production of nuclear energy --from the mining of uranium, which constitutes one of the grossest forms of exploitation of the Native American population, to the still unsolved problem of radioactive waste disposal --are an environmental nightmare from beginning to end. That’s not even counting the unacceptable risk of another Chernobyl or Fukushima-Daiichi type disaster, the periodic smaller-scale releases such as those that have polluted waterways in Illinois, the hazards posed by transporting nuclear materials and waste, the industry’s ties to the nuclear weapons complex, including depleted uranium weapons, and its reliance on massive governmental subsidies, with taxpayers being the “insurers” of final resort. Absent some miraculous breakthrough that can eliminate these unacceptable risks and costs, nuclear energy production cannot be justified. Our goal is an energy future that is “carbon free and nuclear free.”

12. Using government purchasing power, agency practices and contracting authority to promote greenhouse gas reductions and divesting from companies that promote continued reliance on fossil fuels. Government purchasing alone can help boost fledgling energy efficiency companies and products, for example, by requiring the purchase of plug-in hybrids for all new vehicles, or installing energy-efficient LED lighting. State and federal contracting policies should favor companies that have reduced or eliminated their greenhouse gas emissions. Government bodies and public pension funds should divest from companies that promote continued reliance on fossil fuels or otherwise contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions.

13. Removing the restraints on renewable energy caused by Big Oil’s control over those new technologies. The giant oil, auto and other corporations have been known to buy up patents and small

companies that promise new breakthroughs in solar, battery, fuel cell and other technologies, in order to keep us on the same destructive path of over reliance on petroleum. We must revisit our anti-trust and other anti-monopoly laws and create whatever legal means are required to put an immediate end to this pernicious practice.

These do not exhaust all the measures that could move us in the direction of a rational, clean energy policy. Many good environmental organizations have inspired some of the proposals described in this platform. However, among political parties, it is the Green Party alone--devoted to its values of Ecological Wisdom, Personal and Global Responsibility, Future Focus, and to sustainability--that recognizes the urgent necessity of getting these policies adopted immediately.

E. TRANSPORTATION

Taking immediate steps to start weaning our society away from its heavy dependence on petroleum is essential to saving the global environment, saving our economy, and removing an incentive for war.

The Illinois Green Party supports a major commitment to and public investment in, the restoration, development and improvement of clean and efficient public transportation, including inter-city high speed rail, a linked mass transit system for metropolitan areas, intra-city light rail, rail/bus hybrids, and the expansion of bicycle trails and lanes. We encourage car-pooling through the establishment of variable tolls and parking fees based upon the number of passengers per vehicle, as well as other disincentives to discourage private auto use where it is not needed, such as the elimination of free parking and/or road access in areas that are well served by public transit.

We support urban planning and dedication of rights-of-way in our cities and towns to make them more pedestrian-friendly and bicycle-friendly. We believe that mixed-use development should be conjoined with public transit development, so that public transit can provide ready access to and from population, business, commercial, and entertainment centers. We need to follow the basic precepts of smart growth: promoting urban residential/commercial infill, dual use buildings, residences near workplaces and schools, use of vertical density, road/light rail/bike path/pedestrian walkway planning that promotes efficient transit rather than suburban cul-de-sacs and sprawl, conservation of resources, energy efficiency and preservation of housing affordability in gentrifying areas.

The Illinois Green party also supports a ban on the transportation of hazardous wastes on dangerous roads. and the development of emergency response plans for toxic spills on highways and railroads.

We support imposing higher fuel-efficiency standards for motor vehicles, including commercial trucks, with gas-guzzler taxes for those that do not meet these standards and gas-sipper tax breaks for heavy trucks that exceed the standards. We believe that general tax subsidies for automobile transportation should be eliminated, and we support providing monetary incentives for commuters to use alternative and mass transportation.

We support tough emission standards on all motor vehicles and the establishment of a state enforcement program that includes periodic testing and mandatory corrective action for motor vehicles that fail to meet these standards.

We support a major expansion of both private and governmental research, and, if justified by such research, development, of electric, hydrogen fuel-cell, solar-powered and other alternative methods for powering vehicles and rail systems. This would include research on biofuels. However, we recognize that the evidence to date does not justify continued governmental support for the manufacture and sale of ethanol, especially corn-based ethanol. Such support has mainly served as a profitable boondoggle or form of corporate welfare for large-scale agricultural interests that rely on cash-crop, petroleum consuming monoculture. Growing corn for fuel necessarily removes agricultural land from food production, driving up global grain prices and contributing to global hunger. The experience to date should tell us that research and development of other biofuels should be approached with great caution, to determine whether a proposed biofuel actually has the potential to realize a net energy gain, and then considering all environmental and social impacts.*

Government policy in the area of energy development should be based on research results from peer-reviewed journals, and the results of research sponsored by industry and other special interest groups should be reviewed with added skepticism and caution. Policy in these areas cannot be set in stone, but should reflect conclusions reached by reviewing the entire body of current scientific literature. Even if our society manages to design more environmentally friendly and energy-efficient automobiles, we would do well to question our reliance on a heavily subsidized mode of transportation (1) that has resulted in the paving over of 38.4 million acres in the U. S. with roads and parking lots that are themselves built with petroleum-based materials and the loss of 3,000 acres of productive farmland to sprawling development every day; (2) that is the leading cause of death from birth to age 45; and (3) which causes Americans to waste 3.7 billion hours a year stuck in traffic. For these additional reasons, the priority of our transportation policy must be support for public mass transit, especially rail, complemented by human-powered transportation and smarter urban planning.

F. HEALTH CARE

The United States is the only industrialized country in the world that does not guarantee health care for its population. We can start to change that in Illinois by adopting an adequately funded, comprehensive Medicare-for-all, (or “single-payer”) universal health-care system.

The U. S. spends far more on health care per person than any other country in the world – in fact more than twice as much as the average for other rich countries. We have the best technology and certainly among the finest physicians and other health-care professionals. Yet we are not getting our money's worth in terms of good health. The United States ranks near the bottom of the industrialized world in life expectancy, infant mortality, and other standard measures of health. The World Health Organization ranks the United States 37th in overall quality of health-care performance.(WHO 2000). No wonder, since so many don't have health-care coverage at all and millions more have inadequate coverage.

The Affordable Care Act, a/k/a “Obama-Care,” did not substantially remediate the overall problem, because it was not designed to do so. It reduced the ranks of the uninsured, primarily by coercing tens of millions of Americans into buying a defective product: private, for-profit health insurance. Granted, some have benefited from the expansion of Medicaid. But millions of Americans remained uninsured, including about one million in Illinois.

In Illinois in recent years, health insurance premiums have risen. The costs are obviously rising far faster than workers' earnings. Businesses and consumers alike are suffering from either being priced

out of the market altogether, or from the growing strain of paying through the nose for increasingly inadequate health-care insurance. Meanwhile, the for-profit insurance system has led to the closure of many facilities and practices. Most counties in Illinois are experiencing a shortage of physicians or other healthcare professionals. Many rural parts of the state lack access to essential services, including trauma centers.

The framing of this issue by the corporate media and politicians as a “health insurance” crisis, rather than a health care crisis, is a deliberate misdirection. Fifty or more years ago, most people, when they got sick, paid their doctor – directly. Even hospital stays and surgery, while expensive undertakings, did not have quite the shocking impact that they have today. But over the years, as medical technology and methodology improved and became more sophisticated, and as corporations--including health insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, medical device manufacturers, and for-profit health care providers--saw greater opportunities for profit in the health care sector, the costs of all health services climbed. And gradually, more and more people turned to insurance to help pay for it. The idea behind insurance is that consumers pay a “middleman,” on a regular but gradual basis, to cover their health-care needs, rather than pay a huge amount all at once on the unpredictable occasions when they really need it, and, being sick or injured, less able to pay for it. There is nothing wrong with that basic concept. It makes sense economically. The real question, though, is who is going to be in the middle – a private, for-profit business, or a public, nonprofit agency of some kind?

Since 1965, when the Medicare program was launched, our elderly citizens have had coverage from the latter. The rest of us have had to rely on for-profit insurance, and therein lies the problem. The private insurance-based system is driving up the cost of health-care (for Medicare enrollees as well as everyone else) and increasingly sticking us with the bill.

Why? First of all, consumers and employers are necessarily picking up the tab for insurance company profits, as well as executive salaries that run into the millions, or even tens of millions. Because we have nowhere else to turn, they have a captive market.

Second, insurers make money by not paying bills. They have incentives to erect administrative hurdles--by complicating and stalling payment they can hold premiums longer, boosting their interest income. Such hurdles also discourage some patients and providers from pursuing claims. In short, their profits rise when they can find ways to avoid paying bills, passing them on to either the government, other insurers, or to you, the patients.

Third, functions essential to private insurance but absent in public programs --such as underwriting, marketing, and corporate services -- account for about two-thirds of private insurers' overhead. But the waste that results from the system of private insurers is even larger than just the difference in administrative costs. The efforts of private insurers to avoid paying claims force hospitals, doctors' offices, and other health care providers to spend hundreds of billions of dollars dealing with paperwork from the insurance industry.

Fourth, and related to the last point, a fragmented payment structure is inherently expensive. For insurers, it means the duplication of claims processing facilities and reduced insured-group size (small risk pools), which increases overhead. Fragmentation also raises costs for providers, who deal with multitudes of different insurance plans --sometimes hundreds of them. For each patient's plan, providers must keep track of what services and procedures are covered, to what degree and under what

conditions, what co-payments may be required, what referrals may or may not be covered, differing approval requirements and formulas, etc., in hundreds of different variations.

As a consequence of these factors, the administrative costs of the private health insurance system are almost ten times as great (per dollar amount of health-care payouts) as the administrative costs of the Medicare system. That is why the Illinois Green Party stands squarely, unequivocally and explicitly in favor of a Medicare-for-all single-payer universal health-care system that will provide comprehensive, high-quality physical, mental, dental and optical health care.

What is meant by “single-payer”? Simply stated, it means a government-financed health-care system – like our own Medicare system (leaving aside the “reform” regarding drug coverage and the Medicare Advantage Plans), or the system in Canada and many other nations around the world. Under such a system, government pays the bills, all medically necessary care is free at the point of service, and health insurance companies are prohibited from offering coverage that duplicates the coverage in the government plan (they may offer coverage for such non-essential services as cosmetic surgery for non-medical conditions, and higher end hospital rooms).

The adoption of a single-payer system would save consumers money, improve the quality of care and health outcomes, and allow us to better control health-care costs, including the cost of pharmaceuticals –while providing health care for all. A July 2013 study by economist Gerald Freedman found that the adoption of a nationwide single-payer system in 2014 would have saved \$592 billion in costs, more than enough to cover everyone, with money to spare. A single-payer system would have other economic advantages, such as greatly reducing the cost of medical malpractice damages and insurance. Beyond the economic advantages, establishing publicly funded universal health care is simply the right thing to do, reflecting the Green Party value of social justice.

The wealthiest nation in the world clearly ought to be able to deliver quality health care to all its citizens, no less than other industrialized nations. Health care is a critical social good that demands that collective interests prevail over private gain. It should be viewed as a right, not a privilege.

In addition, the Illinois Green Party supports:

1. Strong representation and a decision-making role for health-care recipients and health-care workers, and their unions, in public planning and oversight bodies.
2. More emphasis on promoting public health through better education on nutrition, organic food, exercise, avoiding tobacco and excessive alcohol, practicing safer sex, and other healthy practices.
3. High quality, geographically accessible, and adequately staffed mental health facilities, along with adequate support services, designed to provide a high standard of care in the least-restrictive appropriate environment.
4. Community-based support services for people with disabilities of all kinds, allowing them to live in the least restrictive environment possible; and peer-based support for those in nursing homes and institutions who wish to transition to the community setting.

G. EDUCATION

1. Education Funding

Article X, section 1 of the Illinois Constitution states:

“A fundamental goal of the People of the State is the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capacities.

“The State shall provide for an efficient system of high quality public educational institutions and services.

“Education in public schools through the secondary level shall be free. There may be such other free education as the General Assembly provides by law.

“The State has the primary responsibility for financing the system of public education.”

Plainly, the State has not been meeting the goals or responsibilities set forth in this article. It has even been skimping on its duty to provide free primary and secondary education, as students, parents and teachers in financially strapped districts increasingly find that they must bear the cost of providing the most basic school supplies. Only in the wealthiest districts can an argument be made that our schools provide for the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capacities. The State has also shifted the primary responsibility for financing public education to local districts and local payers of property taxes.

Our public schools are in serious trouble. Illinois continues to have some of the worst achievement gaps in the country and has not succeeded in narrowing them. The achievement gap in Illinois is not surprising, considering that Illinois has one of the highest gaps in school funding, between rich and poor districts, in the United States.

Both the poor performance of Illinois schools and their rampant inequality are due to our State government’s failure to provide adequate education funding for basic school expenses and our State’s over-reliance on property taxes for school funding. Year after year, our State government fails to meet the foundation level of spending recommended by its own Education Funding Advisory Board. State government presently contributes only about 30 percent of school districts’ total revenues. This lack of State support for education places an overwhelming burden on local communities to finance education, with local property taxpayers providing 62 percent of the funding for school districts.

Typically, communities with the greatest needs have the fewest resources upon which to draw. Schools on the state’s academic watch list have considerably higher rates of poverty and lower property wealth than the state average. Due to their relatively smaller property tax bases, these communities have higher tax rates than the state average. Despite these high tax rates, they struggle to generate adequate revenues, and spend less per pupil than the state average. Thus, the school districts with the greatest academic needs and highest poverty lack the resources to invest in programs that can help close the achievement gap.

The problem has been exacerbated by the abuse of tax-increment financing (TIF) districts in Illinois, which have frequently deviated from their intended purpose of revitalizing blighted neighborhoods, and have become a vehicle for rewarding political donors and enriching developers, to the detriment of public schools and other public services. In Chicago, the problem has been further amplified by deals made with various banks by the unelected board of the Chicago Public Schools. From 2003 through 2007, the CPS issued \$1 billion worth of auction-rate securities, nearly all of it paired with complex derivative contracts called interest-rate swaps, in a bid to lower borrowing costs. Under these risky speculative agreements, now known as “toxic swaps,” the CPS was able to borrow large sums of money up-front with relative ease, but agreed to swap interest rates with the banks in the future.

Lenders like Loop Capital, Chase Bank, and Bank of America have ended up profiting while the CPS will end up paying over \$100 million, possibly several times that amount, in added costs.

Higher education in Illinois is in an equally dismal condition. Tuition and fees continue to rise, sources of student financial aid are inadequate to meet the need, programs and course offerings are being eliminated, educators' pay and benefits are lagging, and colleges and universities are unable to pay their bills on time. This is unacceptable. To have a healthy economy, we need a well-educated workforce. But we won't have one if we continue to allow the decline of our P-12 schools and make college unaffordable for lower- and middle-income students. We cannot reconcile these conditions with America's promise, and the promise of our own Illinois Constitution, to create equality of economic opportunity.

It has been shown, time and again, that, dollar for dollar, government spending on education always pays off in the long run, and is generally the best "investment" government can make. Why? Because a better-educated people are more productive, hold higher-paying jobs, and create more jobs and new businesses, creating future government revenue. They also tend to stay out of trouble, imposing less cost on our criminal justice and prison systems and social service agencies. They create a better home environment and better opportunities for their own children.

This has been demonstrated, not only by the experiences of other nations, but by our own history, with the original GI Bill of 1944, which provided our World War II veterans with free higher education, putting 2.2 million of them through college and another 3.5 million through trade or technical schools. This helped pave the way for the sustained economic boom of the 1950s and 60s. Over the 12-year life of the Bill, it cost about \$80 billion in today's money (contrast that with the \$629 billion spent on one year's military budget today) – but for every dollar spent the government was repaid seven times over.

Thus, as with public primary and secondary education, we need to make a major change of priorities with respect to higher education. In Illinois a public college education or trade school education should be free for all who academically qualify. This is not impossible or unfeasible. Many nations around the world provide free higher education for their people, as did some states in this country in the past.

Quality education for all, at all levels, needs to become a goal of government, because it serves the interests of the people. We can achieve that goal by adopting the revenue-generating measures recommended in the State Budget section of this Platform. This will allow the State to provide a much higher percentage of the funding for grade schools, colleges and universities, greatly reducing reliance on local property taxes and tuition, respectively.

2. Education, Family and Youth: A Healthy Home Environment

Our approach to education recognizes that there are two major dimensions to the issue. The home environment is as important a factor to success in education as the public education system itself. We cannot achieve success in education without addressing all the needs of our people and environment, and without re-examining our national and local priorities, including the way our government funds are spent. While government officials proclaim we do not have adequate funds for education, at the same time they squander most of our tax money on militarism and war at the federal level, and tax breaks for the wealthy and subsidies for "corporate welfare" at both the federal and state level. Shifting these resources to education, health and basic social services is a top priority.

Education begins at home. There is no question that the care given to children when they are infants, and even prenatally, has a tremendous and critical impact on their future ability to learn and become full, productive members of society and responsible citizens. The issue of education thus cannot be separated from the issue of quality, living-wage jobs, access to health-care, decent housing and the other basic requisites of a healthy home environment. In addition, education needs to start at the top as well as the bottom: As a society, we need to make parental education – teaching prospective parents how to be good and responsible parents – a priority.

We need to recognize that parenting is real work (as are the other invisible labors of the home) and support it in a real way. A good beginning would be to require employers with 15 or more employees to provide paid maternity or parental leave for a period of at least six months. A living wage law would go a long way to make it more feasible to support child rearing in the home, and to make quality day care affordable for families in which all adults work outside of the home.

In keeping with our support for the family, and the rights of youth, we support:

1. Paid family and medical leave for workers to care for sick children or parents/elders.
2. Flexible hours and/or job-sharing in the workplace, to further support families.
3. Full social security and pension benefits for spouses and domestic partners who raise children and work in the home.
4. Providing safe and enriching gathering places, programs, and work/study opportunities for youth. These should show respect for the wisdom of our young people, giving them opportunities to be heard.
5. More effective intervention to break the cycle of domestic violence. Greater societal support for social workers so that they aren't given impossible caseloads and can provide meaningful intervention and assistance to families struggling with poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and other conflicts.
6. A minimum wage that is a living wage, to include wages for part-time and summer jobs for youth. We support the current campaign for a \$15 per hour minimum wage in Illinois.
7. Making universal pre-kindergarten available to all Illinoisans. This goal was adopted into law in 2006 but has not been fully implemented.

3. Public Education Policy

As a general matter, consistent with the Illinois Constitution, we support the “public” in public education. Free quality public education, available to all children, is a bedrock principle of our education system and of any democratic republic, the vitality of which depends upon an educated citizenry. We strongly resist attacks on public education and efforts to promote privatization of our schools.

Recognizing the value of a holistic, sustainable approach to public education, the Illinois Green Party supports the following public education policies and reforms:

1. Nutritious, safe foods must be made available and subsidized in all school cafeterias, breakfast and lunch programs, etc. There must be required health and nutrition education for all children and teachers.
2. Citizenship/civics classes, including ethics education, must be required in all schools. Students must learn how to assert their power and rights as citizens to control their government and communities, rather than having citizenship defined as learning to “salute the flag” and follow orders.
3. Human Rights Education (HRE) must be supported in all public schools in Illinois, from preschools to institutions of higher learning. Because human rights issues pervade so many areas of learning (e.g.,

history, social studies, geography, literature), we support the integration of HRE into existing subjects, rather than the creation of new classes artificially focused solely on human rights. Effective HRE will result in better-informed, more compassionate citizens, who in turn will be more willing and able to play a constructive role in their governments and communities. Effective HRE will also embrace understanding of diversity of view and culture, and will include learning about the wide variety of religions and social customs, including those within our own communities.

4. The development of critical thinking skills is imperative to the survival of democracy. Accordingly, students of all ages and at all levels must be encouraged to examine critically all materials presented to them, including science, history and current events, and must be afforded diverse learning materials and the opportunity to develop, express and debate alternative viewpoints, not merely the viewpoints advocated by textbooks, teachers, and school officials.

5. Home economics classes should also be required for all students – for the purpose of teaching real home economics, beginning with the basics of home budgeting, financial responsibility and planning, and avoiding unmanageable levels of debt.

6. We need to make our schools safe – not by promoting a mini-police- state environment but by combining strict enforcement of safety rules with early intervention to promote nonviolent conflict resolution. The school curriculum must include teaching and modeling of nonviolent conflict-resolution and peer-counseling skills. There must be meaningful teaching and discussion of skills surrounding interpersonal relationships, taking into account different cultural mixes.

7. Safe education requires safe transportation to and from school. We support maintaining neighborhood schools and siting new schools in residential neighborhoods, to make travel to school by walking or biking an option for more students.

8. We need to ensure adequate funding of special education for all children with disabilities, physical and mental. This would include having ADA accommodation from the built environment to equipment, including software in education websites.

9. At the national level, we oppose any impositions on school curricula, such as the federal “No Child Left Behind” and “Race to the Top” programs. The federal dollars provided cannot justify sinking our schools under the weight of an education regime that emphasizes testing and “teaching to the test. We are also concerned when local, state, or national “standards” are misused as a means to attack underfunded schools on the ground that they are “under performing.” School performance can only be fairly assessed when schools are given the resources needed to succeed, and when the impacts of poverty and a poor home environment on educational achievement are taken into consideration.

10. We oppose most plans to introduce “merit pay” for public school teachers – a concept that sounds good on the surface but that creates divisiveness over how to fairly assess a given teacher's performance – especially when so many factors affecting student performance are beyond the teacher's control.

11. We support decentralization of the school system, making it responsive to the specific needs of each community. We support policies that encourage meaningful input and participation from all members of the community, including students and parents.

12. We oppose corporate involvement or influence in our school and educational system, via advertising, advertising-biased curriculum, and promotional materials sneaked into classrooms through “donations” of biased teaching materials.

13. We affirm the right of families to home-school their children, and support the entitlement of home-schooling families to the same benefits as are given to private school attendees.

14. We oppose vouchers, or other use of public money to support non- public education and divert public money away from education that is accessible to all.

15. We support the availability of public “magnet” schools that focus on special interests such as science or music. As for charter schools, experiences in Chicago and elsewhere have demonstrated a tremendous potential for abuse, as they have largely been used as a vehicle to promote private profiteering and inequality of educational opportunity at public expense. We do not oppose public charter schools altogether but they should only be permitted to operate within carefully prescribed limits, where the objective is for the school to offer an educational experience that is qualitatively different or specialized. Charter schools must not be used as a pretext for dividing children on the basis of class, race or other improper criteria. Charter school funding should not disproportionately divert resources from other public schools and should not be established to the detriment of neighborhood schools. Charter schools must be subject to the same public sector labor laws as other public schools, and charter school employees should have the same collective bargaining rights as other public school employees. We oppose the “turnaround model” that entails firing teachers en masse, then hiring teachers under lower wages and worse working conditions in order to enrich private, for-profit contractors.
16. We oppose the alarming degree of monopolization of school textbooks by a small handful of for-profit corporations with an agenda to present history, social and physical sciences and other subject matter in a biased manner. We support alternatives to this corporatist model, including the establishment of non-profit institutions to produce textbooks and the use of open-source, collaborative and cooperative methods to develop educational materials and curricula.
17. The school system must recognize and honor multiple learning styles and varying speed of educational development of different children. The definition of “normal” must be expanded to include these different learning types, and the curriculum must be adapted to provide appropriate educational methods to reach all of these children without labeling them as “abnormal.” This includes active children who currently are not given the resources and opportunities needed for them to learn in a healthy way.
18. We oppose medicating, or pressure to medicate, children whose learning styles do not “fit in” with a uniform classroom or the comfort of the teacher. We support education of teachers and others (including parents) in alternate, natural ways of working constructively with children not thriving in the standard “classroom” environment.
19. Military recruitment should not be allowed in our schools (including ROTC and Jr. ROTC). Recognizing that some schools may be resistant to an outright ban on recruiters, we support equal access to our schools by peace organizations, counter-recruitment counselors and alternative service organizations.
20. Ethical topics must be included in teaching science, especially in “controversial” areas such as biotechnology and nuclear power.
21. Education about the Earth must acknowledge the reality of the interdependence of all existence, and must approach the human relationship with this planet and all life that it supports with reverence and respect, not with the view that the Earth is merely an object to be conquered, exploited or subjugated to the will of humans. We need to move away from an anthropocentric view.
22. A well-rounded education must include education and experience in the arts, as well as physical education with adequate time for exercise during the school day. These are not “frills” to be cut at the first sign of financial difficulty but must be understood as a vital part of P-12 education.
23. We support a democratically elected board for the Chicago Public Schools.

H. MILITARISM AND WAR

On April 16, 1953, years before he warned us of the dangers of the military-industrial complex, former President Dwight D. Eisenhower declaimed:

Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.

Our society pays dearly for war. We pay for it with the sacrifice of our sons and daughters, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, who were enticed into military service, drawn mostly from the ranks of the poor and working class. We pay for it with the terrible human and social cost imposed on veterans who survive war with mental and physical disabilities. We pay for it with the terrible human and economic costs visited on the countries that our government chooses to attack, invade or occupy. We pay for it when the stature and respect formerly enjoyed by the United States throughout the world is increasingly replaced with fear, loathing, disgust and hatred. We also pay for it in the most literal sense – economically -- with both direct and indirect impacts on our personal income and quality of life.

The federal government has become a permanent warfare state. It has been at constant war since 2001, and almost as constantly since the Korean War. It currently maintains over 730 military bases worldwide. The current official “defense” budget of over \$824.6 billion (FY 2018) only represents about half of the actual war-related budget, as it does not count separate budget allocations for Iraq and Afghanistan, nuclear weapons, military assistance to other governments, the military components under “Homeland Security,” NASA and other agency budgets, the “black budget” for the CIA, NSA and other spy agencies, the costs of war imposed on the Veterans Administration and the share of interest on the national debt attributable to past war spending. According to the War Resisters League, 45 cents of every federal dollar spent today is spent on militarism and wars, past and present. Current U. S. military spending is greater than that of the next 10 highest national military budgets combined.

Yet as costly as it is to us, the corporate interests that dominate government today find it immensely profitable. Fed by our own tax dollars, supported by Democrats and Republicans alike, the military-industrial complex has become a mainstay of our economy. In addition, the interests of multinational corporations generally have driven our government to seek to dominate other nations, in order to control their resources and markets, and provide investment opportunities where labor costs, taxes and/or regulations are kept low.

The Illinois Green Party opposes aggressive war and intervention as a matter of central principle. We oppose the continuing occupation of Afghanistan, the drone strikes and other military attacks on other nations, unconstitutionally ordered by the president without congressional authority -- and any military intervention and war, excepting for legitimate self-defense to repel an attack. We call for a redefinition of “national security” – a definition based on providing for the economic security and well-being of the people of the nation, rather than the ability to militarily dominate any other nation around the globe. While it is true that the military-industrial complex does employ many civilians, studies have shown that expending the same tax dollars on clean energy, health care, education and other social needs would create far more employment. Thus the military-industrial complex does not promote national security but detracts from it.

Principled opposition to war is necessary – but not sufficient. It is not enough to be “anti-war”; we must be pro-peace. It is not enough to protest against war: We must understand and eliminate the structural, economic causes of war. Here again, the immediate struggle against militarism and war must be linked to the larger struggle against corporate domination of our economy, government and media. If we do not fight the corporatist agenda, if we do not dismantle the military-industrial complex, if we do not put an end to corporate domination of our government, we will be doomed to continuing periodic protests against continuing periodic wars.

Accordingly, while waging the larger fight against corporate domination, the Illinois Green Party, and its candidates for federal office, are committed to the struggle, not only against war, but against militarism. Specifically:

1. Article 1, Section 8 of the U. S. Constitution gives Congress the sole responsibility to declare war, to raise and support armies, and to appropriate money to that use. This was to ensure that the power to wage war would be in the hands of the people's representatives, and not in the hands of one person. The Constitution has been so degraded that Congress now meekly submits and habitually allows presidents to bomb, drone strike and otherwise attack other nations, in blatant disregard for the Constitution, the War Powers Act, as well as the U. N. Charter and other established international law. It has also permitted assassinations, torture and indefinite detention without any consequences befalling the criminals who authorized such acts. We support a Congress that will assert its constitutional authority and, if necessary, use its power of impeachment to halt any further violations of the Constitution by the executive branch.
2. We call for an immediate, massive reduction in military spending, to the level needed for actual defense of United States territory and contributing to international peace-keeping actions under the auspices of the United Nations. A portion of the finances saved by this reduction must be allocated to peace conversion projects, retooling and refurbishing military facilities to serve socially useful purposes, and compensating, retraining and re-employing displaced workers into socially useful jobs.
3. We oppose all research, testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and call for rapid, mutual nuclear disarmament. We support immediate ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and complete honoring of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and any other treaties banning or limiting research, development, testing, or deployment of any nuclear weapons. We insist that the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty be honored.
4. We oppose the manufacture and use of depleted uranium, biological, chemical and anti-personnel weapons such as cluster bombs and mines.
5. We oppose recycling of radioactive waste into consumer or industrial products. We demand full disclosure as to any such use that is occurring or planned. We oppose exporting nuclear waste, including enriched uranium or plutonium, for any use.
6. We demand citizen and state inspection and oversight of the storage and disposition of all radioactive waste.
7. We oppose the militarization of space.
8. Regarding the terrible events of September 11, 2001, we support the call for a new, fully funded, independent and exhaustive investigation of the attacks that occurred on that date.
9. We oppose National Guard units being sent outside the borders of this nation, to serve as occupiers of, or participate in military interventions in, other nations.

This agenda follows from the Green Party values of Nonviolence, Social Justice, Personal and Global Responsibility and Grassroots Democracy.

I. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

In some respects, our society has moved toward realizing the ideals of equality proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, that we are all created equal, and that we all have equal rights under the law. In other respects, however, these goals continue to elude us. Differences of class, race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, and other ways of being, continue to stack the deck against many members of society. Society as a whole is the poorer for it.

These truths about our society today are self-evident:

1. A person born into poverty does not have a chance to thrive equal to that of a person born into wealth.
2. A person born into an abusive or neglectful home environment does not have a chance to thrive equal to that of a person raised in a comfortable, nurturing home environment.
3. A child sent to a poor, run-down school with overcrowded classes, poorly paid teachers and outdated textbooks does not have an opportunity equal to that of a child sent to a well-funded, well-equipped school with small class sizes, well-paid teachers and modern tools of learning.
4. Despite some progress, a person with a skin color other than white still must confront institutional barriers, negative assumptions and expressions of hostility. Meanwhile simply being born with white skin bestows institutional privilege.
5. Despite some progress, women must still confront institutional barriers, "good old boy" networks, insidious biases, sexual harassment, and physical, political and religious attacks on their person that men do not have to confront.
6. Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual non binary and gender non-conforming people are often subjected to violent hatred and brazen discrimination and are without federal civil rights protection or means of redress.
7. Persons of different nationalities, non-christian religions, or non-religious beliefs, persons with disabilities and persons who simply have a physical appearance that differs from the "conventional" still face prejudice and persecution.
8. Notwithstanding the fact that there are many police officers who perform their duties responsibly, all of us may potentially have our rights violated by police agencies that are institutionally encouraged to mistake repressive and sometimes brutal practices for zealous law enforcement and by the courts that increasingly give tacit approval to such practices. People of color are especially singled out and subjected to brutal treatment based solely on skin color.

In keeping with our values of Social Justice, Feminism and Respect for Diversity, the Illinois Green Party is dedicated to the struggle to cure these social maladies. We are defenders of civil liberties and human rights, and proponents of social equality. We stand with all Americans who hold the view that diversity should be celebrated, not made a basis for oppression, mistrust or hatred. And we are dedicated to transforming these values into political action.

To some extent, these values are advanced by other sections of this platform. Working people of all races, male, female, non binary and gender non-conforming can and should unite around their common interests to attain full and equal economic opportunity for all, quality health care and education for all, and a healthy environment for all living things. To the extent that these goals are realized, working people will be less prone to be divided against one another along the lines of race, sex or other differences.

However, the evils of discrimination and prejudice must still be confronted directly on the political field as well. Toward that end, the Illinois Green Party supports the following measures:

1. Strengthen the Illinois Department of Human Rights with more and better- trained investigators and legal staff. Authorize the Department to conduct independent investigations of discriminatory lending, housing and employment practices statewide, including the use of “testers” of different races, sexual orientation, gender, non binary, and gender non-conforming.
2. Provide adequate funding to public legal services agencies that serve low- income people and authorize them to handle civil rights cases.
3. Halt racial profiling by regularly monitoring police practices regarding traffic stops and arrests. Strengthen Fourth Amendment protections by penalizing police officers who make traffic stops or “stop and frisk” detentions without reasonable suspicion of illegal activity.
4. End the racist “war on drugs” and the unofficial campaign to incarcerate young black males.
5. Defend affirmative action in higher education – while working to make higher education freely available to all who need it.
6. Make “welfare to work” programs realistic: Provide real support that can enable single parents to survive, with child support, transportation and other social support, so that they can obtain meaningful job training and conduct a meaningful search for a job that can support a family. Hire more social workers to give the long-term unemployed and disadvantaged persons more meaningful, one-on-one assistance.
7. Aggressively enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act and implement the Olmstead decree (a Supreme Court ruling requiring all states to provide a range of housing options to people with disabilities) in Illinois. Provide living assistance, support services and transportation assistance to our disabled brothers and sisters so that they can fully participate in our society.
8. Improve public health research to create parity for research of afflictions that disproportionately harm minorities and women.
9. Enforce equal protection and equal rights for gender and sexual minorities (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Non-binary, and gender non-conforming).
10. Honor and enforce treaties with Native Americans.
11. Eradicate environmental racism.
12. Support passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U. S. Constitution.

J. VOTERS’ RIGHTS AND ELECTORAL REFORM

The Illinois Green Party calls for a true government of, by and for the people. This is only possible through easy access to voting by all people; proportional representation rather than the present winner-take-all approach; accurate, untampered counting of every vote; and easy access of all people to the information they need to make informed decisions on who and what to vote for. The government should protect people and the planet from the excesses of moneyed interests. Our elections should be clean, fair to all candidates, informative, accurate, and reflective of the public will, not the power of big money.

The Illinois Green Party supports clean-money elections and more media access for all candidates. We favor stronger campaign finance limits on donations in Illinois, and we favor limits on the transfer of funds from party leadership to candidates.

We also favor a ban on corporate campaign contributions in Illinois, as exists now in federal elections. However, the prohibition of direct corporate contributions to candidates is not enough to halt the

influence of big money on elections. In the wake of Supreme Court decisions that protect the free speech “rights” of corporations, more far-reaching measures are required. At the federal level, we support the “Move to Amend” the proposal to amend the U. S. Constitution, so as to eliminate corporate “personhood” and permit government to regulate spending on political speech. At the state level, we can effectively bar corporate interference in the political process by reinvigorating our corporate chartering laws, and imposing a new requirement: That corporations shall not be chartered, nor foreign corporations allowed to do business in Illinois, unless they agree not to engage in speech aimed at influencing its officeholders or candidates, or provide monetary support to any organization that aims to influence officeholders or candidates.

We support a rational, independent redistricting process in Illinois, based on contiguous, common-sense geographic and established governmental boundaries, without favoritism to incumbents or any parties, and without discriminating against any ethnic or identity group. Such a process should include provisions for meaningful public review and input, and judicial oversight.

We will fight to end “pay-for-play” in Illinois by banning campaign contributions from state contractors, their owners and officers -- and barring the awarding of contracts to any company whose owners or officers had made such a contribution to an incumbent. Contracts should be awarded on the basis of merit, with consideration given to historically disadvantaged groups and under-served communities.

We must combat illegal job patronage in Illinois. All applicants for non-policy-making State jobs must be selected on the basis of objective criteria by an independent bureau.

We support a public financing option for both federal and state campaigns.

We support the principle that the public airwaves belong to the people. We call for the reinstatement and enforcement of the Equal Time Provision of the Federal Communication Act, requiring broadcasters to carry debates including all ballot-qualified candidates and provide free time for all such candidates as a license requirement to use our public airwaves. We also support reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine.

The Illinois Green Party supports strict enforcement of the surviving provisions of the Voting Rights Act. As especially the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections demonstrated, the intimidation and disenfranchisement of communities of color still goes on. We oppose voter “caging” and other dirty tricks used to disenfranchise legally qualified voters. The Department of Justice must strengthen its vote enforcement division to swiftly investigate and prosecute those who interfere with voting rights. We oppose voter ID laws that restrict voting to those who obtain state-issued identification. The Illinois Green Party supports making voting easier and more reliable. Citizens should be able to register to vote up to and on voting day itself, with appropriate protections against voter fraud. To maximize voter participation, voting could be conducted by mail, or voting day could be a national holiday, or on a weekend. Voting precincts should be adequately staffed with sufficiently trained personnel and professional supervision. Outside of reasonable, uniform campaign-free zones, all campaigns should have equal access to speak to voters near polling places.

We support the abolition of the Electoral College and its replacement with a majority-rule election. The President should be elected by direct, popular vote and must receive a majority of the votes to take office. If no candidate receives 50% plus one of the votes cast, a runoff must be held.

We support greater empowerment of the people through direct democracy: Illinois voters should be able to place not only advisory referendum questions, but referenda and initiatives having the force of law, on the Illinois ballot without onerous petition-signature requirements. By the same process, they should have the right to place on the ballot, for decision by majority vote, the question of recalling elected public officials before their term of office has expired. Laws that restrict the number of local or county referenda that may be placed on the ballot should be repealed. We support preserving the right for citizen participation in annual town meetings.

The Illinois Green Party supports Instant Runoff Voting. To encourage more participation in the electoral process, voters must know that their vote can really count. By allowing voters to rank candidates in order of preference (first choice, second choice, third choice, etc.), if no candidate gets a majority of first choices, a runoff count can be conducted without the need for a second election. Just as in a traditional second-election runoff, the majority choice can be determined, while also allowing voters the opportunity to vote for those candidates they like the most without worrying that in doing so their vote will help candidates they like least. Instant runoff voting also promotes positive campaigning and coalitions, since winners may need the second choices from opponents' supporters.

The Illinois Green Party supports proportional representation. "Winner-take-all" is a very undemocratic way to choose representatives to government. When 49 percent of voters in a legislative district support a candidate, they should not get 0 percent representation. Most democracies in the world use some form of proportional representation to choose legislatures. Illinois should do the same – as it once did, until 1980. We support a return to three-member districts for the Illinois General Assembly, elected by cumulative voting. Cumulative voting allowed for the election of political minorities and made for a more diverse legislature.

In order to ensure that every vote is counted and counted accurately, we support a system of voting based on paper ballots, with random, independent audits of election tabulations. Representatives of minority parties and independent candidates should be permitted to observe and record vote tabulations.

Since our judicial system is charged with providing the fair and even-handed administration of justice, it should be as free as possible from partisan politics. Judges should be selected either by non-partisan election or an independent merit-based system.

We support reform of our prohibitive ballot access requirements in Illinois, to allow far easier access to candidates of smaller or newer political parties. We demand low-threshold, uniform and equal petition-signature requirements for all candidates seeking political office, regardless of political party. We call for eliminating the "challenge" process for determining the validity of candidate petitions, which is expensive, time-consuming, and encourages frivolous challenges. The State Board of Elections can instead simply perform randomized checks on samples of petitions submitted by candidates to make an initial determination of validity, subject to more thorough checking as needed.

The Illinois Green Party supports the creation of independent and non-partisan election administration bodies. Electoral commissions at all levels of government should be free of control by any political party.

The Illinois Green Party supports statehood for the District of Columbia. We support the right of United States territories, including Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Marianas Islands and the Virgin Islands, to be allowed to choose either statehood (with full voting rights), independence, or to maintain their current status.

The Illinois Green Party also supports other electoral reforms that advance democracy and a more representative government. These include election, rather than appointment, of local government boards, such as park, library, and community college boards, and a democratically elected school board in the City of Chicago. Allegations of police misconduct should be heard by elected citizen review boards, with the power to subpoena witnesses and impose discipline.

Youth in America are allowed to work at age 16 and are eligible for the draft at 18. Since laws affect the workplace and since youth should have the opportunity to elect or remove public officials who support policies that could send them to war, the Illinois Green Party supports the right of citizens of the United States who are sixteen and over the right to vote, provided that citizens of age 16 or 17 first complete an approved high-school level curriculum on civics and government.

The Illinois Green Party believes that if these reforms are made, Illinois and America will be a stronger and healthier democratic republic.

K. WORKERS' RIGHTS AND WORKERS' POWER

In order to transform the economy so that it serves the people, the Illinois Green Party is dedicated to the goal of empowering working people. Thus, we support government policies that will improve the quality of life for working people in all areas, not only materially, but also with respect to more leisure and family time, access to health care, better working conditions, and a better environment, both inside and outside the workplace.

The objective of empowering workers means supporting workers' right to organize. At the national level, we call for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act and support measures that will make it easier for workers to organize without interference from their employers and to bargain with the employers effectively.

We support full funding of the National Labor Relations Board, including its investigative and enforcement divisions, so that it can adequately act against unfair labor practices. Employers that unlawfully discharge employees for protected union activity should be subjected to stiffer penalties and required to immediately reinstate the discharged employees.

We support Fair Trade, not corporate globalization. So-called "free trade" deals such as NAFTA, CAFTA and the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which actually promote corporate interests above the interests of national sovereignty and national interest, have cost us quality industrial jobs and undermined laws protecting our environment. We need to repeal treacherous free trade policies and replace them with trade policies that protect the interests of our own industrial base and the interests of workers, and our environment, at home and abroad.

We adamantly oppose the passage of “free trade” agreements that have the same agenda. We also oppose the historically used, thoroughly undemocratic “fast track” process by which the executive branch has pushed through trade deals, in which the details of the negotiations are kept secret from Congress, the agreement is signed before Congress acts, no floor amendments are allowed and debate is limited.

We support a genuine living wage. The goal of creating full employment, with fulfilling jobs that pay enough to support a family, can be advanced by raising the minimum wage beyond baby steps enacted by our federal and state governments, to a level that would allow all workers to climb out of poverty. Thus we support the current campaign to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. We support other “living wage” initiatives, from the local to the state to the federal level. The best of these measures require all government workers and all workers in businesses that receive a contract, subsidy or other material benefit from government, to be paid a living wage, meaning at least 25 percent above the federal poverty level for a family of four, periodically adjusted for inflation.

By “bargaining up” the price of labor, such measures help raise living standards for workers generally. While some argue that such measures harm the economy by imposing higher labor costs on marginal businesses, the experience to date supports the conclusion that businesses do better in a living wage environment, as greater purchasing power in the hands of workers boosts the economy, including most businesses that initially struggle with the higher labor costs. Well-designed living wage laws can also create partial exemptions or assistance for start-up, small and struggling businesses.

The Illinois Green Party also supports other measures to improve working conditions and the quality of life for workers, including:

- lowering the work week with no loss in pay;
- Requiring employers with 15 or more employees to provide paid maternity or parental leave for a period of at least six months;
- Guaranteed paid vacations for employees after the first full year of employment;
- Restoration of defined-benefit pensions (instead of defined contribution) and a Social Security system worthy of its name and original promise;
- Better enforcement of occupational safety and health standards, and
- laws that would protect workers from being fired without just cause.

L. CIVIL LIBERTIES AND THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

The Illinois Green Party opposes the many attacks on our civil rights and liberties, and the unauthorized and unconstitutional consolidation of executive power that have been imposed on our people, and the people of other nations, in recent years. These include:

1. The USA Patriot Act.

2. The Real ID Act, which took steps toward the creation of a national identification card system, a characteristic of totalitarian governments.

3. The alarming increase in domestic spying on American citizens, without a warrant or court oversight, in brazen violation of the Fourth Amendment. This now includes executive branch monitoring and data collection of phone calls, e-mail and other personal data and communications, often with the cooperation or assistance of large corporations in the electronic communications field, and unconstitutional domestic spying by local law enforcement agencies. We oppose new methods of intrusion into privacy, including the use of drones for domestic surveillance.

4. The Military Commissions Act, the indefinite detention of persons without trial, and the undermining of the fundamental right of habeas corpus.

5. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2012, which authorized the indefinite military detention of persons the government suspects of involvement in terrorism, including U. S. citizens arrested on American soil.

6. The use of presidential “signing statements” to undermine or modify duly passed legislation.

7. The executive branch’s use of drone strikes to carry out assassinations of persons not actively engaged in combat with the United States, with no declaration of war, Congressional authorization or oversight, including the assassination of American citizens.

8. Growing restrictions and police assaults on the right of the people to peaceably assemble and protest in public places, especially against public officials and at the political conventions of the Democratic and Republican parties.

9. The growing militarization of municipal and state police forces, supported by grants of weaponry and equipment from the Pentagon and the Department of Homeland Security.

10. The extensive operations of government that are conducted in secret, especially within the federal executive branch, including the national security apparatus and so-called “black budget” expenditures, that get little oversight from Congress, let alone the general public. Relatedly, we oppose growing restrictions on the Freedom of Information Act (both federal and state versions) and other efforts to limit transparency in government.

11. Growing restrictions on freedom of speech, including those resulting from the privatization or other loss of formerly public spaces where people may gather, discuss issues, petition and otherwise exchange ideas.

12. Reclassifying the internet as an information service rather than a public utility, and repealing net neutrality. *

13. National Security Agency's (NSA) warrant-less collection of domestic phone records, on-line searches, emails, videos and voice chats, and other communications.

One of the consequences of corporate control of our political system is that it generally favors the consolidation of power at the executive level and increasing the repressive powers of the state. We join with those who defend the rights of the individual, as set forth in the Constitution, Bill of Rights and the foundational principles of our republic, against these encroachments.

M. REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

The Illinois Green Party supports the goal of making every child a wanted child: Defend and support women’s full right to reproductive choice –including genuine social support for those who choose to bear children, affordable access to safe abortion for those who do not, and better sex education and access to contraception for all. We are motivated by considerations of gender equality, privacy and civil rights, consistent with Green Party values.

The right to privacy and women's (and men's) right to control their bodily integrity are protected by the U. S. Constitution. Government should not be permitted to invade this right, or impose the tenets of any particular religious or philosophical doctrine on the individual, and we advance the view that this should be a matter of individual conscience.

At the same time, the Green Party welcomes those who, as a matter of personal conscience and choice, oppose the practice of abortion, motivated by a "consistent ethic of life" (a commitment to the protection of life on the planet, which is threatened in today's world by war, poverty, environmental degradation, racism, capital punishment, abortion and euthanasia). The Ten Key Values of the Green Party are certainly consistent with this philosophy. We want to protect life, especially human life, and enhance the quality of that life.

We acknowledge that people on both sides of the abortion "divide" are motivated by deeply held principles. We should not let the abortion issue divide people of good will, but should promote a unified struggle to create conditions that will make abortion increasingly unnecessary and rare.

We also acknowledge that people on each side of the abortion "divide" don't always agree with each other, and that there are complex sub-issues. While no reasonable person can deny that the human embryo and fetus are living, nonetheless reasonable people can disagree as to the point at which the embryo or fetus becomes sufficiently developed to be a "person" protected by law.

Reasonable people on both sides recognize the need to act to protect the health and safety of the mother. There is also broad agreement that abortion is the least preferred method for preventing the birth of an unwanted or unplanned child. On this basis, we can bridge the divide: We can stop making abortion such a divisive issue by working together to reduce the incidence of abortion – but without criminalizing it.

The unifying goal should be to help men and women avoid unwanted pregnancies in the first place and help make every child a wanted and well-supported child. We can enhance women's right to full reproductive choices by improving women's (and men's) economic opportunities, by working toward the goal of promoting full employment at living-wage (or better) jobs. As described elsewhere in our Platform, if the economic and social policies advocated by the Illinois Green Party were adopted, they would ensure that every child raised in America would be guaranteed a good material start in life, with a home, adequate and nutritious food, quality health care, and quality education.

Such a quality education must include comprehensive, age-appropriate sex education and free family planning services for young adults. We support free access to, and promotion of, contraception, including "morning after" or emergency contraception. We need to provide genuine societal support for single mothers who do choose to bear children, so they can provide a nurturing home environment for their children through infancy before having to return to the workforce.

Through these policies, we can reduce the incidence of abortion while still respecting women's right to choose.

N. STATE BUDGET ISSUES

Government has a basic obligation to raise enough revenue to support its own core functions. Our state government has failed to perform even this most elementary task, largely because most of its current members owe greater allegiance to their corporate benefactors than to the people they are supposed to

represent. This provides one of the clearest demonstrations of why new, Green Party leadership is badly needed.

Since the turn of this century, Illinois has been bedeviled by the twin demons of a structural budget crisis and the worst unfunded public pension liability in the United States. As a consequence, budget after budget, the people of our State have been subjected to repeated cutbacks to education and essential public services. As a further consequence, the quality of education has suffered, tuitions and student debt have soared, eliminating higher education as a viable option for more and more young people. More and more Illinoisans who are unable to care for themselves have been deprived of the support they need. Public and environmental health and safety have been compromised.

Corruption and waste is surely one dimension of the problem. We will identify and target government waste as only Greens can – members of a people’s party with no stake or interest in continuing political patronage, “pay to play,” and the “spoils” system of government. We also support the creation of a citizens’ auditing board, with investigative authority, to supplement the work of the auditor general. However, spending cuts targeting real waste and even major reductions in corruption cannot, by themselves, restore stability to our operational budget. The structural budget deficit is not caused by excessive spending, excessive state employment or overpaid public employees. It is fundamentally caused by a structural revenue problem.

That structural revenue problem, in turn, is caused by the fact that Illinois has one of the most regressive tax systems in the U. S. When the combined effects of the income, sales, property and other state and local taxes and exemptions are measured, low and middle-income earners are taxed at a far higher rate than the wealthiest 1 percent. The current system taxes poverty more than wealth. Yet most of our so-called political leaders act as though they can’t conceive of any way to raise new revenue, and refuse to address the core problem.

In fact, solutions to the problem are well known. What is lacking is the political will to implement them.

These include;

- A constitutional amendment to allow a progressive or graduated income tax in Illinois. A genuine progressive income tax could allow the state to raise billions of dollars in new revenue while reducing the tax burden on the vast majority of the people.
- A sales tax on speculative trading in Illinois, as occurs on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Board Options Exchange, Board of Trade and Stock Exchange. While even the poorest Illinoisans must pay steep sales taxes on necessities, the wealthy purchasers who spend tens of trillions of dollars on options, futures, credit default swaps and other derivatives do not pay any sales tax whatsoever on sales that occur at these Illinois facilities. A minuscule tax, of only a fraction of one percent on such transactions, would raise billions of dollars in new revenue.
- A public bank. This will allow the state to use the revenues it collects to invest in authorized projects that benefit the people of Illinois, and keep the interest collected for the benefit of the people--rather than enrich the private financial institutions that prey upon workers, homeowners and taxpayers. Such a bank could provide low-interest credit to Illinois-based businesses, farmers and college students, finance a Green capital bill, and help the state pay its bills without additional reliance on tax revenues. It could help moderate the effects of economic downturns by making credit more widely available at reasonable rates of interest.

- Taxes or fees on emitters of pollution, including greenhouse gases.
- Ending prohibition, and implementing reasonable taxation, of cannabis.

None of these solutions are new or unproven. Most states have some form of graduated income tax. Many nations tax financial speculation to help fund their governments. North Dakota has had a successful public bank that has helped it balance its budget since 1919.

While supporting real solutions, we oppose false or illusory ones, including expanding legalized gambling as a method of raising new revenue for state programs. Gambling is a hidden tax on the poor. Those who can least afford it – people with household incomes under \$10,000 – bet nearly three times as much on lotteries as those with incomes over \$50,000, according to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission. The rates are undoubtedly similar for casino gambling. Any true measure of the impact of gambling must balance the revenues gained against the economic and social costs of more ruined lives, more bankruptcies and homelessness, more crime and domestic turmoil. It would have to measure the loss of disposable income to casino owners from gamblers who would otherwise expend it on real goods and services at local businesses.

We also categorically oppose efforts to “solve” the state’s unfunded pension liability problem by attacking the pensions and benefits promised to public retirees and current employees. The State has a constitutional duty to honor its promises to public servants, retirees and surviving spouses.

The barrier to social progress in Illinois is not a lack of solutions but a political leadership beholden to corporate and financial interests that benefit from maintaining the status quo. Real change can begin only with new Green leadership in Springfield.

O. FEDERAL BUDGET ISSUES

Many right-wing political leaders have exaggerated and manipulated fears over federal budget deficits and the national debt as a vehicle for attacking federal spending on social needs. To the extent that the growing national debt presents a legitimate concern, it could readily be alleviated by: a) dismantling the military-industrial complex, prison-industrial complex and the “national security” state, and spending only what is needed for legitimate defense and public safety, and b) enacting national monetary reform, thereby allowing us to fund the federal government through direct issuance of currency, as described in the Finance, Banking and Monetary Policy section of this Platform.

In addition, a federal tax on speculative trading could raise hundreds of billions of dollars in new revenue to fund public services, while also moderating the pace and volume of this volatile form of trading that can harm the real economy of goods and services.

We also support a more progressive tax structure, a rapid phase-out of fossil fuel-related subsidies and allowances, strict review and elimination of other harmful subsidies and tax breaks, and stronger measures to capture revenue from corporations that relocate production or hide domestic income in other countries.

Although Social Security is not part of the federal budget, many commentators and political leaders deliberately conflate the two, as part of a broader effort to dismantle Social Security in favor of a riskier, private-investment-based system. We oppose these attacks on Social Security. One immediate action that must be taken to assure the future stability of Social Security is the removal of the income

cap on Social Security taxes. Other measures may also need to be taken, after the effect of this action has been evaluated. We also favor closing loopholes that bar some educators and other public workers from participating in the Social Security system.

We support reducing or eliminating the self-employment tax, which imposes a disproportionate tax burden on individual producers and small business owners, discouraging small enterprise in favor of large corporations.

P. FINANCE, BANKING AND MONETARY POLICY

The sub-prime mortgage crisis that caused the national economy to crash in 2008 was only one symptom of a much larger disease. As giant multinational corporations and banks have looted our economy and ruined much of its industrial base, it is now heavily dominated by the “FIRE” (Finance, Insurance and Real Estate) sector. This sector has taken advantage of low-income and middle-income workers, especially people of color and women, students and the disadvantaged, by engaging in an unprecedented expansion of credit and debt, fueled by deceptive and unconscionable predatory lending practices. Manipulated by the same institutions, the federal government has deliberately dropped the ball in regulating wild speculation based on such practices. As a result, our national economy continues to languish under a crushing burden of indebtedness.

If elected to office, Greens in government would work to “bring the FIRE under control.” One top priority would be to stop foreclosures, with a goal of saving home ownership – not by bailing out predatory lenders with taxpayers’ money. Bold strategies would be employed to bring record credit card debt and student loan payments within affordable limits.

The Illinois Green Party also supports more sustainable pathways toward home ownership, and community ownership of productive resources, through community land trusts, producers’ cooperatives and similar institutions that empower the people.

The Illinois Green Party believes that an essential condition for the improvement of neighborhoods and communities, as well as rural and unconsolidated areas in Illinois, is for people who dwell in these places to have fair and equal access to credit and banking services, especially lower-income and minority communities, in the form of home and business loans made widely available on reasonable and responsible terms. Therefore, we support the continued existence and rigorous enforcement of the Community Reinvestment Act, which mandates that financial institutions doing business in local communities set aside a portion of their loan funds for use by individuals, organizations, and businesses in those communities.

The predatory practices of banks and other lending institutions are not limited to their direct scamming of unwary consumers. The monetary foundation of our Republic is itself a longstanding target. Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution gave the power to issue the nation’s money supply to Congress. But in 1913, Congress abdicated that responsibility and turned it over to the Federal Reserve, a private banking cartel given the right to issue Federal Reserve Notes and lend them to the U. S. government. These notes, issued by the Fed for the cost of printing them, today form the basis of the national money supply. Except for coins, which compose only about one one-thousandth of the total U. S. money supply, all of our money is now created by banks. Federal Reserve Notes (dollar bills) are issued by the

Federal Reserve, a private banking corporation, and lent to the government. Furthermore, Federal Reserve Notes and coins together compose less than three percent of the money supply. The other 97 percent is created by commercial banks as loans.

The "reserves" of the Federal Reserve consist of government bonds (I.O.U.s or debts). The government issues bonds; the Federal Reserve issues Federal Reserve Notes, which are essentially just traded for the bonds, leaving the government in debt to a private banking corporation for money the government could have issued itself, debt-free. One consequence of this system is that new money must continually be borrowed into existence just to pay the interest owed to the bankers. The economic problems generated by our spiraling national debt problem could be greatly alleviated if Congress were to take back its Constitutional power to issue the nation's money, and banks were restricted to responsible lending practices based on actual funds, rather than a never-ending supply of government bonds, ultimately backed by taxpayers. Accordingly, we support measures to nationalize the Federal Reserve or otherwise restore the power to issue money to Congress. Rather than borrow money, at interest, from private banks, the U. S. government would spend money into circulation through federal programs and projects, paying workers directly to perform the projects and services we need, thereby directly attacking unemployment.

Greens would explore the benefit of digital currency in local communities, and in the creation of a public state bank. However not only the cost of power generation but the type of power generation required to run peer to peer computers and digital currency miners would have to be factored in. We would also explore use of the blockchain and other emerging technology in IL government.

Q. IMMIGRATION POLICY

A sensible immigration policy, comporting with Green values, must begin by recognizing some basic precepts.

First, the fact that there are millions of undocumented immigrants in this country with few legal rights is a huge problem for all working people. Other things being equal, when the supply of labor rises, relative to demand, the price of labor – wages – will fall. That is simply a fact of economics. And when a large part of this increased supply consists of undocumented workers who can be forced to work under miserable conditions and even below-minimum wages, it has an even larger downward impact. An underground economy that defies minimum wage laws will necessarily take away jobs that pay decent, or at least minimum, wages. Unscrupulous politicians and political commentators use this situation to whip up anti-immigrant sentiment among native-born working people.

Second, our society should recognize that the majority of immigrants who come from Mexico, Central America or other impoverished regions are being driven by dire circumstances. They do not leave their homelands and families and take tremendous risks to get here because they want to take away American jobs. They are trying to do the same thing that workers everywhere do – survive, support their families, and hopefully make a better life for themselves. It makes no sense to criminalize them for it. A Green immigration policy has to be grounded in the demand for social justice for all working people, documented and undocumented.

Third, our society should recognize that, except for Native Americans, who were here first, and African Americans, descended from persons who were kidnapped and inhumanely shipped here as slaves the rest of us "Americans" are descended from immigrants, most of whom were fleeing either persecution or economic hardship, or both – just like immigrants today.

Fourth, our society should recognize the real causes of the present situation. These include:

A. The role of U. S. based giant agribusiness corporations, the international banks, NAFTA, CAFTA, and U. S. foreign policy generally, in creating massive poverty in Latin America in the first place. Farmers in Mexico are being driven out of business and driven off their land by our heavily subsidized corporate agribusiness, which floods the Mexican market with cheap imported corn and other grain. Already poor to begin with, many of these displaced farmers flocked to the factories and sweatshops near the border, called maquiladoras, where they were exploited by U. S. manufacturing corporations. However, now many of the maquiladoras have closed, their operations moved to China or other nations where their owners can exploit even cheaper labor. These displaced farmers and former farm and factory workers comprise most of the desperately poor who are being driven to seek work in the United States.

B. The demands of U. S. agribusiness and reckless urban growth in unsustainable regions has also led to depletion of water resources (e.g., the Colorado River) that has further harmed Mexican agriculture, generating more poverty.

C. The role of U. S. corporations, and smaller sweatshops in the United States, in the agriculture, meatpacking, construction, textile and other industries, as well as restaurants, custodial contractors, landscaping contractors, etc., in knowingly employing undocumented workers, so that they can get away with paying sub-standard wages. These are the real criminals – the giant corporate outfits and the sweatshop capitalists alike.

D. Other factors, such as the oppressive and corrupt government in Mexico, which has betrayed its people in order to cater to multinational capital, and which has cynically used immigration as an escape valve for its own unemployment problem.

Fifth, every nation has a fundamental right to control its own borders and the terms and conditions of entry into its territory. However, considering the causes of immigration listed above, we must recognize that the immigration problem cannot be solved by militarizing our borders or building a wall to literally seal the southern border. The attempts to address the problem through such oppressive means create other adverse consequences, including disruption of ecosystems, and promotion of greater militarism and police-state methods.

Sixth, we believe in the rule of law and we are searching for a way to develop an immigration policy that is socially just and consistent with the rule of law. We also need to recognize that a policy to expel millions of people who have been living and working here for years is extremely unjust. Any solution to the immigration issue has to be grounded in respect for the human rights of the undocumented immigrants. Accordingly, to bring our policy in line with the rule of law, we must find ways to make legal pathways to immigration easier and faster, both for workers who seek entry and workers who have already been contributing to our society, and their children who have never known any other country but the United States.

Seventh, we must be extremely vigilant against our government undermining our basic civil liberties under the guise of searching for undocumented immigrants. We must not allow politicians of any party label to use scare tactics to further attack our liberties.

Eighth, the Illinois Green Party accepts as a goal a world in which persons can freely choose to live in and work in any country they desire. We recognize that this would be impractical without reciprocity between nations. We seek that reciprocity as a practical goal. Countries do have a right to know the identity of persons seeking to enter. They also have the right to limit who can come in to protect public safety and legitimate security concerns.

While these precepts may not yield perfect answers, they provide better answers than what is being done now. We must recognize that there cannot be any true solutions to the conflicts created by immigration until we are able to organize globally to overcome the power of multinational corporations, which are engaged in an unending campaign to drive down workers' living standards everywhere. International cooperation and solidarity among labor organizations, to advance the rights of labor and raise such living standards globally, are essential to combat this trend. Until the power of the multinationals is curbed, we will continue to be confronted with seemingly "no win" choices.

While working toward that goal, we support the following immigration policies as steps in the right direction:

1. The undocumented immigrants who are already residing and working in the United States, and their families, should be granted a legal status which includes the chance to become U. S. citizens. Persons should be excluded from this process only if they present a clear danger to other members of our society. The level of fees required for this process should not be a burden on low-income workers. Any path to citizenship should include recognition of past, uncredited payments into the Social Security System as part of any fees assessed for regularization of status.
2. In regard to who should have a right to come and live and work in the U. S., we support the following policies:
 - a) The Green Party calls for permanent border passes to all citizens of Mexico and Canada whose identity can be traced and verified. Mexico's "matrícula consular" should be accepted as one means of proving one's identity. Work permits for citizens of Mexico and Canada must be easily obtainable, thereby decriminalizing the act of gainful employment. This action would help eliminate exploitation of undocumented persons by criminals engaged in human trafficking and by unethical employers. It would also help ensure that taxes will be paid in each corresponding nation per its laws. These measures will also help temporary residents from Mexico and Canada to secure driving privileges and liability insurance.
 - b) All persons fleeing political, racial, religious, or other types of persecution must be welcomed, offered asylum and offered an opportunity for permanent resident status, excluding only those who are clear risks to public safety.
 - c) Family reunification must be a priority in accepting applications for permanent residency. The years of waiting that families are currently put through must be ended.
 - d) Permanent residency should not be denied based on political views, racial or national origin, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other arbitrary basis.
 - e) We must keep faith with our commitment to the United Nations, to assist in the resettlement of refugees currently stranded in refugee camps in other parts of the world.
 - f) All those who are issued work permits must have the option to come and go from the U. S. as they desire. They must also have the option of remaining in the U. S. and becoming U. S. Citizens.
3. Recognizing that a just reform of immigration policy may take some time, the Illinois Green Party supports:

a) Giving legal status to undocumented immigrants who graduate from high school in the U. S. and who are otherwise qualified, to allow them to attend colleges and universities on an equal basis with other high school graduates. The Green Party is opposed to efforts to force undocumented youth into the U. S. military as the price for legal status.

b) Reducing wait lists and make the system work more efficiently: current numeric caps on immigrant visas must be increased. The current system of quotas and preferences has to be thoroughly and realistically reformed. Current backlogs must be brought up to date as soon as possible. Wait times for processing and resolving immigration benefit applications should be reduced to no more than six months. Pre -1996 screening criteria for legal permanent residency and citizenship applications should be restored.

4. The understandable concern about immigrant workers competing for jobs with current citizens cannot and should not be addressed by criminalizing undocumented immigration or punishing fellow victims of U. S. corporatist policies. Instead, we must reverse the policies. Among other things, we should repeal NAFTA, CAFTA, and other corporate globalization policies. We must stop using our tax dollars to subsidize corporate agribusiness and to promote poverty in Latin America, and start using them to help reward environmentally responsible family farmers, encourage improved infrastructure and economic conditions in Latin America, and raise labor standards, at home and abroad. Here at home, we must also promote the policies, outlined in the Workers' Rights and Workers' Power section in this Platform, that can help us achieve a full employment economy at a living wage, including strictly enforcing and expanding the rights of all workers to form unions.

5. We advocate an end to employer sanctions, which have been shown to hurt not only undocumented workers but also U. S. born workers (especially those of color). Instead, the focus on employers must be to vigorously enforce our wage and labor laws. Don't further victimize the victims of corporate globalization; create real opportunities and raise labor standards for all!

6. We oppose provisions allowing state or local police to become agents of federal immigration authorities. Local policing functions should be totally separate from immigration enforcement.

7. We oppose "English-only" legislation. Immigrants already have ample incentive to learn English. But when interaction with the government is limited to the English speaking, persons are put at additional risk of exploitation. The focus needs to be on providing adequate and accessible English language instruction and assistance. We advocate legislation to ensure that federal funds marked for communities to provide English as a second language training, and health and social support services to immigrants, actually go to them. Meanwhile, courts, social service agencies, and all government agencies dealing with the public must provide trained and certified translators. Additionally, the language rights of peoples who were in this land before it became part of the U. S., including Native Americans and Mexicans in the Southwest, must be recognized and respected.

8. We oppose the militarization of our borders, misusing the National Guard as border police, and building a wall between the U. S. and Mexico. This will further intensify the human rights disaster our immigration policy has become, as well as seriously harm border ecosystems. We demand an immediate end to policies designed to force undocumented border-crossers into areas where conditions dramatically increase the risk of permanent injury or death, destruction of fragile environments, and the cutting off of corridors needed by wildlife for migration within their habitat. For these reasons we specifically oppose the walling off of both traditional urban crossing areas and of wilderness areas. We also call for the immediate dismantling of any existing border wall.

9. We must resist proposals that use illegal immigration as an excuse to put us all under further government monitoring and control by means of a national ID card or other identification or tracking systems. Citizen workers who have been propagandized to support "tougher" measures to identify and apprehend undocumented workers need to carefully consider what they are asking for. The same snare

they want the government to use against undocumented workers can easily be used to repress them. A national ID card system is one of the hallmarks of a totalitarian government. We oppose any system that would suppress freedom to travel and require citizens and non-citizens alike to "show their papers" and reveal their private information to government monitors at every turn.

10. We demand recognition of the sovereignty of indigenous nations whose territories cross national boundaries. These indigenous nations have the right to determine the status of their members.

11. We demand new policies and laws to deal more effectively and humanely with the victims of illegal international trafficking in humans, primarily women and children who are bought, kidnapped, coerced, defrauded and marketed for forced sex and prostitution. We oppose the deportation of victims before the traffickers are prosecuted, which frequently allows the traffickers to escape justice. The victims of trafficking should have the option of permanent residence in the U. S. or being returned to their home country.

R. CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

In Illinois, as in the rest of the nation, our criminal justice system is in dire need of an overhaul. The United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world—by far. Our country has less than 5 percent of the world’s population but nearly one-fourth of the world's prison and jail population. As of 2011, over 2.26 million adults were incarcerated in U. S. federal and state prisons and county jails – the majority for nonviolent offenses. Over 4.8 million were on probation or parole. Together, nearly 3 percent of the adult population was under some form of correctional supervision and control.

Our nation spends approximately \$75 billion a year on so-called corrections. Yet despite the millions spent on new prisons annually, our prisons are still bursting at the seams with overcrowding. The dehumanizing treatment experienced by most prisoners makes it all the more likely that they will commit violent acts upon their release. The current theory that our society can solve the crime problem by punishing or "incapacitating" criminals through massive, long-term incarceration isn't working.

The crime problem needs to be attacked on several levels. The most important step is to address the causes of crime by creating a healthier economic system that can provide well-paying jobs for all who need them. Poverty and economic insecurity are not the sole causes of crime, but they are probably the most important single factor. Economic insecurity also breeds domestic violence and child abuse which, in turn, perpetuates violent behavior when abused children become adults.

Another important step is to redefine the kinds of conduct that are regarded as “criminal.” The astronomical increase in the prison population since 1980 is mostly attributable to an increase in prison sentences, and longer sentences, for persons convicted of drug-related and other nonviolent offenses.

Indeed, much of the prison-overcrowding problem stems from our society's misguided attempt to legislate morality by criminalizing the use of drugs. It is senseless to punish people for using a relatively benign substance like marijuana while the use of more harmful substances like alcohol, tobacco, and many pharmaceutical drugs is encouraged through mass advertising. The prohibition of more addictive drugs such as cocaine or heroin only ensures that the price remains so high that many addicts must turn to theft or prostitution to feed their habit. We advocate a more sensible policy: Cannabis should be legalized, with legal use restricted to adults. The penalties for simple possession and use of other drugs should be greatly reduced with drug rehab being an option.

Serious substance abuse problems of all kinds, including alcohol and tobacco, should be dealt with as a public health matter, not as a criminal matter, with more resources devoted to drug education, treatment and social intervention. A sensible policy on drug abuse and crime should also eliminate the hypocrisy, double standards and injustices that permeate the criminal justice system today, such as:

1. The hypocrisy of the federal government continuing a “war on drugs” when the CIA for years collaborated with organized crime in allowing the import of heroin and cocaine into the United States, and when poorly regulated pharmaceutical and “health supplement” corporations are repeatedly allowed to market products unsafe for human consumption.
2. The injustice of “civil forfeiture” laws, which have allowed law enforcement agencies to rake in millions of dollars by seizing the property of persons who have merely been accused of drug offenses and retaining the property even when the accused is later found innocent.
3. The double standard of specially targeting African-Americans for arrests and tougher prosecution, resulting in a disproportionate rate of convictions, longer sentences and a higher rate of capital punishment for African- Americans than for white Americans.
4. The double standard of imposing severe punishment for victimless crimes, while much corporate, “white-collar” crime – including violations of environmental and worker safety laws that can kill hundreds or thousands of people – often goes unpunished or is punished by “slap on the wrist” fines.
5. The injustice of providing inadequate resources to public defenders’ offices, resulting in wrongful convictions and incarceration of poor people.
6. The injustice of allowing private enterprise to exploit prison labor, a policy that eliminates real jobs from our communities, while undermining unions and the wage standards of all workers.

Finally, when people must be incarcerated for committing violent or other serious crimes, our criminal justice system must make serious attempts to rehabilitate offenders, not just punish them. This means housing them under humane and healthy conditions, providing counseling, psychiatric evaluation and therapy when needed, making reasonable allowances for family and conjugal visits, and providing more opportunities for education and vocational training. Reasonable and complete health care should be provided – as should be provided to all Illinoisans. We oppose the privatization of prisons, and of health care and other services within the prisons. The use of alternatives to prison, such as "half-way houses" and programs that help convicts find jobs and manage their lives successfully, should be expanded. Persons convicted of crimes should be encouraged to turn their lives around, not brutalized and degraded.

Our public policy must pay much more attention to what happens to convicts after their release from prison, to provide temporary living assistance, job placement services and employment opportunities, to minimize recidivism. People who have served their time, including supervised release, without re-offending, should not be barred from holding public office or most government employment. The Expunging of criminal records, within a reasonable time after release from custody, should be made automatic for minor offenses, and more readily available for other offenses, where the former offender has not re-offended.

Such measures do not signify that Greens are "soft" on crime. To be truly "tough" on crime means attacking the causes of crime as much as possible, focusing on crimes that truly harm society, and focusing on turning offenders into productive, law-abiding citizens. It means recognizing the human potential for redemption and rehabilitation.

This Green policy on crime and criminal justice will be far more effective at eradicating crime than the policies of those who talk "tough" but who lack the political courage to attack this complex problem with integrity.

S. AGRICULTURE AND FOOD POLICY

Agriculture and the entire food system must be transformed so that they truly meet basic human needs and become regenerative, sustainable and active forces in healing the Earth.

The Illinois Green Party seeks to encourage patterns of food purchasing and dietary choices that foster self-reliance, both in our country and abroad. We support the movement to “eat locally” whenever possible, and the urban food-growing movement, as these help promote energy sustainability and community-based economics. We support policies that will help advance these movements.

We promote eating lower on the food chain, giving preference to regionally produced, organic foods grown on biologically balanced soils. We favor confronting the health, ethical, environmental, and economic issues related to the drawbacks of meat-and dairy-based diets. We call for truth in nutrition science, nutrition education and nutrition labeling, instead of the current regime in which government nutrition information and recommendations are repeatedly twisted by food processing corporations with an interest in keeping Americans on an unhealthy diet.

We call for the establishment of an ecologically based, sustainable agricultural system that moves as rapidly as possible towards regional/bio-regional self-reliance. The emphasis of agricultural research should shift to support these goals.

We support the central tenets of permaculture: 1) Care for the earth, providing for all life systems to continue and multiply; 2) care for the people, ensuring that people can access the resources necessary for their existence; and 3) return of surplus, meaning the reinvesting of surpluses back into the system to support the first two ethics.

Soil conservation and regeneration and water conservation must be promoted as one of our top priorities. We should fund the development of alternatives to fossil-fuel-based fertilizers that will regenerate the soil. This will help lessen farmers’ over-dependence on big petrochemical/agribusiness corporations.

We need improvement and acceleration of small watershed programs to protect and conserve our soils.

We support full federal funding of the SNAP (supplemental nutrition assistance program a/k/a “food stamps”) program, at a level calculated to eliminate hunger and malnutrition. We support restoration of New Deal-era food programs, including the strategic grain reserve, parity pricing, and crop subsidies that include soil conservation incentives, rather than crop insurance.

The Illinois Green Party calls for halting all uses of poisonous pesticides and encourages the widespread use of integrated pest management. We oppose the patenting of any life form and the introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) into our ecosystem. We support a moratorium on the patenting, licensing and introduction of GMO foods until the broader legal, ethical, and economic questions are resolved. We are categorically opposed to food irradiation, which creates new, unknown health risks while lowering nutritional quality. As long as GMOs and irradiated food exist, we insist that they be clearly labeled so the public can make informed decisions.

America needs to change farm programs and tax and fiscal policies that presently place small and family farms in a disadvantaged position compared with that of large, corporate farms. We endorse policies that advance community and family organic gardens as a top Green priority. We oppose "factory farming" practices, which are inhumane to animals, damaging to the environment, harmful to surrounding communities and harmful to consumers, including the widespread use of antibiotics on livestock.

We call for strengthening "organic certification standards."

We support legalization of industrial hemp, a remarkably versatile product with numerous applications, that can provide a valuable source of income for farmers. In order for bio-regions to increase self-reliance in food production, we encourage the formation of food producer associations, cooperatives and economic development organizations to advance the manufacture of value-added agricultural products within regions. We also encourage community-supported agriculture programs, from community gardens to farmer/consumer purchasing agreements. Farm service, credit and action programs for family farmers should be administered by democratically administered community and county committees of farmers, in cooperation with local conservation district boards. We support requiring land grant universities to be more fully engaged in research in sustainable, organic, ecologically balanced agriculture.

It is crucial to protect genetically diverse seed stocks. We support the citizen-led organized resistance to bio-devastation, genetically engineered foods and corporate control of the world food supply. We oppose corporate control of seed stocks and support farmers' control of their own seed supplies.

More specific to Illinois, we oppose the Peotone Airport (the so-called "third airport") and other misuses of our eminent domain laws to take away agrarian land, not for legitimate public purposes, but to promote reckless, sprawling development.

Flat top industrial buildings must re-route, conserve, or re-use rainwater to keep it both from evaporating and from being dumped into the storm runoff system.

While we support protection of genuine wetlands and natural areas, no farmer should be forced to stop farming land which has a cropping history without being given a right to appeal and without full and fair compensation for the land.

T. MEDIA, THE ARTS, AND INFORMATION

We recognize that free access to information is one of the cornerstones of the ability of communities to control their own lives and make meaningful decisions. The public has a right to know what is happening in the news, current events, the sciences, and the environment. The increasing centralization and corporate control of the media has made access to relevant sources of information increasingly difficult. We are bombarded with false, biased "news" plus sophisticated corporate advertising campaigns, to disempower us from learning about, and responding to, what is really happening in our communities and the world at large.

We deplore the corporate media's promotion of a culture that encourages "buying and acquiring," violence, sexual exploitation, economic and racial elitism, and chauvinism. This is damaging to our communities, the environment, and socially disconnecting our youth from each other by encouraging competition over cooperation.

Accordingly, and in keeping with the Ten Key Values:

1. We support the continuation and growth of independent, non-corporate media. We support the access of reporters and journalists from independent media sources to press conferences and all events to which the corporate media are invited.
2. We support the decriminalization of "pirate" radio transmissions that remain amateur and that do not interfere on other permitted radio frequencies, and the existence and growth of community radio and community/public access television stations. Public access to the airwaves is an essential part of our free press and our community control of our lives. We support access to public funding and technical information for these entities. We support community broadband Internet access.
3. We vigorously oppose targeting of children and the elderly by corporate advertising.
4. In the interest of privacy, we support vigorous enforcement of the Do Not Call list to prevent unsolicited advertising by telemarketers.
5. We support public funding for the arts, including the creation of works of art and the access of the public to experience them, without corporate or government censorship of their political content.
6. We oppose hidden corporate advertising being incorporated into so-called non-advertising sections of news. We oppose the use of corporate press releases and "PR" wires as "news" stories, especially those that do not mention the source of the "information."
7. We oppose the glorification of violence, aggression, and sexual exploitation in our media.
8. We oppose the media's demeaning and misleading representations of people of varying races, nationalities, religions, and cultures, of women, and of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and non binary or gender non-conforming people.
9. We support funding for arts education.
10. We support the right to privacy, and we oppose corporate access to our personal data without our informed consent.
11. We oppose the aggressive campaigns and misleading advertising of credit card and other financial companies that entice the public into debt.
12. We support access for reporters and journalists to all sources of information.
13. We support protection of reporters and journalists, regardless of whom they work for, from negative consequences, job-related or otherwise, of telling the truth. We support immunizing government whistleblowers from retaliatory employment consequences and prosecution.
14. We support net neutrality—the principle that the Internet is a public utility, and that Internet service providers and governments should treat all data on the Internet equally, not discriminating or charging differentially by user, content, site, platform, application, type of attached equipment, or mode of communication.
15. We support the open source movement. Proprietary software should not be used in any voting system and government agencies should be encouraged to use open source software elsewhere, when feasible.
16. We call for the repeal of the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) relaxation of the ban on cross-ownership of broadcast media and newspapers in major markets. We oppose any further relaxation of rules limiting media consolidation and monopolization.

17. We oppose media collaboration with the federal government to spy on the American people in violation of the Fourth Amendment.

APPENDIX: UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948

<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>