



Friday, August 14, 2020

Members of the Platform Committee,

We are current and former elected Democrats from many states, representing millions of Americans. We are members of Congress, state legislators, and local officials. Like you, we are committed to the Democratic principles of equality, fairness, and democracy. We have committed our careers to advance Democratic ideals and policies. Many of us represent purple districts, where it is difficult to earn and retain elected office as a Democrat. One of us is a Democratic governor in a red state. We respect the pro-life leanings of our constituents.

We are united by three major concerns:

1. **We are concerned that many Democratic leaders support policies on abortion that are radically out of line with public opinion.** Many Democratic leaders support abortion at any time, for any reason; this position is opposed by 79% of Americans.¹ The 2016 Democratic Platform endorses taxpayer funding of abortion, opposed by a supermajority of the population.² The same platform endorses taxpayer funding of abortion in developing countries, opposed by three-fourths of voters.³
2. **We are concerned that, due to this wide disparity, the Democratic Party is alienating voters.** In 389 out of 435 Congressional districts, a majority of voters support a ban on abortion after 20 weeks.⁴ When Democratic leaders support late-term abortion, they push many voters into the arms of the Republican Party. Many people holding pro-life views are single-issue voters.⁵
3. **Finally, we are concerned about the betrayal of Democratic Party values.** An extreme position on abortion rights violates our commitment to inclusivity and diversity. Polling consistently shows that one in three Democrats are pro-life.⁶ We must respect and include these 21 million Democrats.

We support reintroducing the conscience language from 2000 into the 2020 platform, which acknowledges that Americans have differing and deeply held views on abortion.⁷ We call upon the Democratic Party to avoid divisive policies, such as passing a law in Congress defining a right to abortion (“codifying Roe v. Wade) and introducing taxpayer-funded abortion (“repealing the Hyde Amendment”).

Fundamentally, we believe that every single state and county in this country deserves Democratic governance. We should not cede large swathes of the United States to the Republican Party. In the US, pro-life Democrats have been a critical part of the coalition to expand voting rights, improve health care, and pass criminal justice reform. These accomplishments would not have been possible if the Democratic Party had in place a litmus test on abortion.

We respectfully submit that the Platform Committee considers these suggestions and opens the hearings to hear the voice of innumerable elected pro-life Democrats across the United States of America.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned

¹ 21% believe that abortion should be available to a woman any time during her entire pregnancy (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 3)

² 60% oppose using tax dollars to pay for a woman’s abortion (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 8) 2)

³ 76% oppose or strongly oppose using tax dollars to support abortion in other countries (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 9)

⁴ CCES 2018; DFLA analysis

⁵ 30% of pro-life voters will only vote for a candidate with their views, vs. only 19% of pro-choice voters (Gallup Polling; July 2020)

⁶ 29% of Democratic voters identify as pro-life (Gallup Polling; 2019)

⁷ Suggested language: “We respect the conscience of each American and recognize that members of our party have deeply held and sometimes differing positions on issues of personal conscience, such as abortion. We recognize the diversity of views as a source of strength and we welcome all our members to participate at every level of our party.”



Governors (3)

John Bel Edwards
Governor, Louisiana

Ben Nelson
U.S. Senator (former)
Governor (former), Nebraska

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor (former), Colorado

Members of Congress (9)

Collin Peterson
U.S. Congressman, Minnesota

Dan Lipinski
U.S. Congressman, Illinois

Kathy Dahlkemper
Erie County Executive, Pennsylvania
U.S. Congresswoman (former), Pennsylvania

Jim Barcia
Bay County Executive, Michigan
U.S. Congressman (former), Michigan

Charlie Stenholm
U.S. Congressman (former), Texas

Tony P. Hall
U.S. Congressman (former), Ohio
Ambassador to the UN Agencies for Food & Agriculture (former)
Three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee

Bart Stupak
U.S. Congressman (former), Michigan

Lincoln Davis
U.S. Congressman (former), Tennessee

Brad Ellsworth
U.S. Congressman (former), Indiana

State legislators (57)

Deborah Fellela
State Representative and Deputy Majority Leader, Rhode Island

Roman Prezioso
State Senator and Minority Leader, West Virginia

Katrina Jackson
State Senator, Louisiana

Regina Barrow
State Senator, Louisiana



Sharon Weston-Broome
Mayor-President, Baton Rouge
State Senate President (former)
State House Speaker (former), Louisiana

Malinda White
State Representative, Louisiana

Colleen Garry
State Representative, Massachusetts

Elizabeth Crowley
State Senator, Rhode Island

Camille F. J. Vella-Wilkinson
State Representative, Rhode Island

Pat Moore
State Representative, Louisiana

Chris Tuck
State Representative
Majority Leader (former), Alaska

Gerald Boudreaux
Senator, Louisiana

Dustin Miller
State Representative, Louisiana

Francis Thompson
State Representative, Louisiana

Jay Luneau
State Senator, Louisiana

Gregory Tarver
State Senator, Louisiana

Nathan Reitz
State Senator, Illinois

C. Travis Johnson
State Representative, Louisiana

Kenny Cox
State Representative, Louisiana

Gary Smith Jr.
State Senator, Louisiana

Robert Phillips
State Representative, Rhode Island

Bob Evans
State Representative, Mississippi

Alan Silvia
State Representative, Massachusetts

John DeBerry
State Representative, Tennessee

Bruce Maloch
State Senator, Arkansas

Mike Gabbard
State Senator, Hawaii

Lawrence Brent Boggs
State Representative, West Virginia

Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Representative, Texas

Harry Readshaw
State Representative, Pennsylvania

Mike Driscoll
State Representative, Pennsylvania

Ray Ring
State Representative, South Dakota

Robert Plymale
State Senator, West Virginia

David Coughlin, Jr.
State Representative, Rhode Island

Mack Jackson
State Representative, Georgia

Richard Martinez
State Senator, New Mexico



Gabriel Ramos
State Senator, New Mexico

Chris Harris
State Representative, Kentucky

William O'Brien
State Representative, Rhode Island

Raymond A. Hull
State Representative, Rhode Island

Frank Lombardo
State Senator, Rhode Island

Leonidas P. Raptakis
State Senator, Rhode Island

Alan Gentry
State Representative, Kentucky

Joseph Sanchez
State Representative, New Mexico

Gregory Constantino
State Representative, Rhode Island

Joan Barry
**Committeewoman, State Democratic
Committee**
State Representative (former), Missouri

Daphne Campbell
State Senator (former), Florida
State Representative (former), Florida

Rebecca Hamilton
State Representative (former), Oklahoma

Jason Frerichs
**State Senator and Minority Leader (former),
South Dakota**

Joel Sheltroun
State Representative (former), Michigan

Chris Richey
State Representative (former), Arkansas

Phil Barry
State Representative (former), Missouri

Jeffery Arnold
State Representative (former), Louisiana

Tim Probst
State representative (former), Washington

Bernard LeBas
State Representative (former), Louisiana

Samuel Cann
State Senator (former), West Virginia

William P. McKenna
State Representative (former), Rhode Island



Local officials (30)

Monica Sparks
Kent County Commissioner, Michigan

Stormy Gage-Watts
Caddo Parish, District 7 Commissioner, Louisiana

Robbin Hamilton Watt
Majority Leader, City Council, West Haven, Connecticut
Treneé McGee
City Council, West Haven, Connecticut

Evelyn Ware Jackson
EBRPSS Board Member, District 5, Louisiana

Dr. Diane B. Evans
President, Association of Democratic County Chairs, Georgia
Candidate for State House (former), Georgia

Teresa Carroll
Secretary, Jackson DPEC, Louisiana

Rabbi Craig Miller
Member, Passaic Board of Education, New Jersey
Board member, Democrats for Life of America

Victor Celentino
County Commissioner, Ingham County, Michigan

Larry Paige
Committeeman, State Democratic Committee, Louisiana

Frank Edwards, III
At-Large Member, Tangipahoa DPEC, Louisiana

Robert Gillon
Chairman (former), City of Kingston Democratic Committee
Ulster County Democratic Committeeman, New York

Michael Lutz
Bay County Commissioner, District 7, Michigan

John Thomas
City Councilman, Pennsylvania

Mike Quinn
County Commissioner, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

Chuck Adams
City Attorney, City of Sheboygan, Wisconsin

John Gleason
Genesee County Clerk-Register of Deeds, Michigan

Sheldon Matthews
City Council, Saginaw, Michigan

David Donofrio
At-Large Representative South-Western City Schools, Ohio

Trey Mustian
Chairman, Jefferson Parish Democratic Executive Committee, Louisiana

Dusty Rhodes
Hamilton County Auditor, Ohio

Matthew Crawford
Democratic State Delegate, Indiana

Dylan Frick
8th Congressional District Chair, North Carolina



Jerid L. Anderson
State Delegate, Texas

Howard J. Castay, Jr.
Candidate for State House (former)
At-Large Member, St. Mary DPEC, Louisiana

Kevin Honnell
Los Alamos Public Schools Board of
Education (former), New Mexico

Edwin Garcia-Arzola
State delegate, North Carolina

Joe Turnham
Chairman of the Alabama Democratic Party
(former)
Member of the DNC (former)
Democratic Nominee (former), U.S. House of
Representatives, Alabama

Janet Robert
City Council (former), Oak Park Heights
Candidate for U.S. House (former), Minnesota

Keith McCants
Oglethorpe City Councilman (former),
Candidate for Houston County Commissioner,
Georgia

Democratic nominees (6)

Dawn Barlow
Democratic Nominee (former), U.S. House of
Representatives, Tennessee

Jennifer Childers
Democratic Nominee, State House, North
Carolina

Jimmy Holbrook
Democratic Nominee, Chattooga County Sole
Commissioner, Georgia

Jonathan Burke
Democratic Nominee, State House of
Representatives, Michigan

Mike Vick
Democratic Nominee, State House, Indiana

Michael McKinney
Democratic Nominee, State Senate, Maine

Total signatures: 105