

2020 District 24 Democratic-NPL Convention Principles and Resolutions

The members of District 24 of the North Dakota Democratic-NPL Party unite to work for equal opportunity, personal freedoms and limited government.

District 24 of the North Dakota Democratic-NPL Party supports the following principles:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, PERSONAL FREEDOMS AND LIMITED GOVERNMENT

1. We believe that all people are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, chief among them life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, that people create governments to secure these rights and that government gains legitimacy only from the consent of the governed.
2. We believe in constitutionally limited government serving only those vital public purposes not met through other means.
3. Officials should be freely and fairly elected or appointed by officials so elected, should govern transparently and should exercise authority only within constitutionally established limits.
4. Rule of law and an independent judiciary are essential to constitutionally limited government and to personal freedom and equal opportunity.
5. A legitimate government lacks the authority to treat people differently based on factors such as religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, ancestral origins, political party or parental social status.
6. We uphold personal responsibility in using freedoms and in people experiencing benefit or harm according to their personal choices.
7. We support the civil and political rights, liberties, privileges, and immunities guaranteed in the United States and North Dakota constitutions.
8. The equal freedom of all citizens should be unhindered by elementary ignorance and illiteracy, unimpaired by damage to them or their property by the actions of others without their consent, and unencumbered by crime, corruption or extreme concentrations of power.
9. We believe in strong, fair and efficient enforcement of our constitutions, our laws and our national security and borders.
10. Government fills its best and proper role without needing to interfere with private moral and religious choices by sustaining a society that rewards hard work, innovation, productivity, creativity, personal responsibility and obedience to law.

District 24 of the North Dakota Democratic-NPL Party supports the following resolutions:

I. FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS AND LEGISLATIVE INTEGRITY

1. We support efforts to reduce the influence of money in political campaigns and on our elected officials, including strong financial disclosure requirements for both candidates and parties before taking or resuming office.
2. We support an election process free of procedural barriers that disenfranchise and discourage voters or particular classes of voters.
3. We endorse requiring a paper trail to facilitate a transparent canvassing and recount process.
4. We support a non-partisan redistricting commission that shall be responsible for drawing congressional and state legislative districts.
5. We support legislation requiring legislators to carry out their functions transparently, with full disclosure of gifts received while in office; and with public access to the minutes of legislative proceedings.
6. We support the creation of a **an effective and fair** State Government ethics commission.
7. We support a state law prohibiting the conversion of campaign funds for personal use.

II. HELPING THE MOST ECONOMICALLY INSECURE

8. We recognize that the income inequality gap has been widening for the past three decades and support local, state and federal policies that will reverse this trend. ~~While some inequality is expected and beneficial,~~ Extreme inequality can and does impinge personal liberty through factors such as concentrated power and the extreme economic and medical insecurity of one's family.
9. We support efforts to provide affordable housing for the citizens of North Dakota.

III. WORKER PROTECTIONS

10. We support passage of an Injured Workers Bill of Rights.
11. We support increased availability for affordable and quality daycare.

12. We support giving unemployment compensation to North Dakota workers who are locked out of their worksite.
13. We support maintaining a defined benefit retirement plan for teachers and public employees, including police officers.
14. We oppose any and all efforts to privatize Social Security or to undermine this important program.
15. We support efforts to eliminate the cap on taxable earnings for Social Security taxes.
16. We believe that all Americans deserve to earn a “living wage” defined as a wage that is high enough to maintain a normal standard of living. Each state should determine their living wage and use that as their minimum wage.
17. **We support protections for all workers not covered by worker’s compensation.**

IV. HEALTH

18. We oppose any attempts to repeal the federal Affordable Care Act.
19. We support increased statewide access to Behavioral Health services, including treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and addiction, especially opioids.
20. We support policies to encourage serving local, fresh foods to K-12 students as a way of addressing the related epidemics of childhood obesity and diabetes.
21. We strongly urge that all necessary steps be taken to ensure that veterans receive the health care and related services they need in a timely manner – particularly, those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) — ~~when they return home from military service abroad~~. The veteran should be able to access necessary services at the facility closest to their home of record and we ask the North Dakota Congressional delegation to support this request at the national level.
22. We, in keeping with the ND voters’ wishes as expressed at the ballot box in 2008 and in keeping with the originally-stated purpose of ND’s Tobacco Settlement negotiations, support continuing to invest the designated portion of those payments in the statewide tobacco prevention/cessation program, “Saving Lives-Saving Money.”
23. We support building on existing laws to improve health care affordability, to expand access to health care, and to expand health insurance coverage especially for job-seekers and low-income households with the eventual goal of universal access to affordable health insurance.
24. We support increasing support for regional and tribal addiction treatment centers and mental health and substance abuse treatment.

25. We support making changes needed to reduce prescription drug **cost and** abuse in the state and nation.
26. We support expanding the eligibility for North Dakota Healthy Steps and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIPS).
27. We support continued state funding for stroke registry, training and public education.
28. We support efforts to increase the proportion of people trained for Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation and regular progress until completion in placing the recently developed heart resuscitation devices in all frequently used public buildings.
29. We support expansion of the Division of EMS administrative support and local matching grant program.
30. We support state funding for EMS training grants and paramedic student loan forgiveness for citizens willing to serve in a rural community.
31. We support medically accurate sexual health education in schools, with a goal of reducing unwanted pregnancies.
32. We support the establishment of a Medicaid Fraud Unit in the ND Bureau of Criminal Investigation.
33. We support providing health benefits and Workman Compensation Insurance to volunteer firefighters and emergency responders.
34. We support the ~~implementation of the passed~~ legislation to have medicinal marijuana ready for usage by those in medical need and following provisions of the legislation.
35. We support restoring full funding of the Independent Living Program sponsored by the Open Door Center.

V. FARMING – SAFE FOOD SUPPLY

36. We support research and development in our land grant universities of Non-GMO crops to assure Non-GMO seed availability for the future.
37. We support public breeding of bioengineered crops that have resulted from marker-assisted technologies identifying desirable traits within one species, especially when the end products further reduce the monopolistic control of the food system by corporations.

38. We support family held ownership of farms. We support upholding the anti-corporate farming laws that limit corporate ownership of farms to family held entities.
39. We support policies to expedite the development of bio-firms whose purpose is to supply sustainable, bio-based agricultural inputs to farmers and ranchers, given that these bio-firms are appropriately scaled, locally owned and managed.
40. We support funding for the Agricultural Products Utilization Committee.
41. We support the State Mill and Elevator buying only domestic grain whenever possible.
42. We oppose the introduction of genetically engineered fish until the ecological and health effects have been proven safe.
43. We oppose the use of public funds by the North Dakota Commissioner of Agriculture to seek out issues for possible litigation. Rather, if legitimate issues arise requiring litigation, such efforts should be led by the Attorney General and special funds allocated only as needed.

VI. LANDOWNERS' RIGHTS

44. We urge the 2021 North Dakota Legislature to enact measures that would require forfeiture of leases on the part of oil and gas companies that do not meet the bonus payment terms of a mineral lease.
45. We call for reforming the state's eminent domain law so that: (1) no state agency may exercise eminent domain solely on the grounds of economic development (increased tax base, tax revenues, employment, etc.); (2) no state agency can authorize eminent domain for a privately owned oil, gas, coal or carbon dioxide pipeline passing through the state – unless the pipeline exports North Dakota products or imports products for sale in North Dakota; (3) the ND Public Service Commission (PSC) is required, with the assistance of the ND Attorney General, to prepare and publish a guide outlining the rights of property owners facing possible eminent domain actions and to distribute this guide directly to all landowners and other residents and renters who may be subject to eminent domain; and (4) based upon complaints filed with the PSC by persons alleging the use of harassment, threat, intimidation, misrepresentation, deception, fraud or other unfair tactics by the person or people acquiring or attempting to acquire an easement, there is a process in place whereby the PSC may directly hear the complaints and take action such as imposing fines, voiding contracts or ordering compensation.
46. We support strengthening North Dakota law to ensure that private property shall not be taken or damaged for private use without the consent of the owner.

VII. CLEAN WATER & AIR – HUMAN MADE CLIMATE CHANGE

47. We support science-based actions to reduce the threat of human made climate change, including legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through a clean energy subsidy financed by a dirty energy tax, both set at the earliest possible stage of energy production or importation based on expected greenhouse emissions per thermal unit for an energy product, with the goal of no net change in the market price of overall energy, so as to address the economic, social and environmental threats of climate change.
48. We oppose the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Climate Accord.
49. We support state and/or federal legislation that would require oil companies using the technique known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, to disclose the chemicals contained in the fracking fluid to the North Dakota Department of Health.
50. We support the reduction of methane pollution by a more efficient regulation related to oil drilling and flaring.
51. We support efforts by the ND Department of Environmental Quality to create a state implementation plan that will work for North Dakota and federal legislative efforts seeking a common-sense approach to EPA rulemaking under the Clean Air Act.

VIII. TAXES

52. We oppose any tax not necessary to reduce government debt or fulfill an essential and legitimate government function. Officials owe taxpayers efficiency, frugality, transparency and accountability in how they use government revenue.
53. We seek a society in which increased earned income through productive work always yields increased net income after government taxes and subsidies.
54. We ~~generally~~ support wealthier people paying income tax at higher rates.
55. We support simplifying the tax code ~~by a higher standard deduction, by eliminating, limiting or capping tax loopholes, (such as those related to second homes regularly in the top quartile of local home values, and those loopholes which only help special interests) and by easier taxpayer estimation of eligibility for remaining loopholes.~~
56. We believe reducing the number of tax brackets does not make it easier to do taxes but instead usually creates work disincentives and regressive taxation.
57. We support a sales tax exemption on prescription and OTC medications and feminine hygiene products.

58. We support the expansion of tax incentives for renewable energy, with an emphasis on locally owned projects.
59. We support exempting the most economically **ly** insecure **people** from state budget cuts wherever possible.
60. We support **a** the-revision of the 2017 tax cut legislation so that it would restore the Affordable Care Act and no longer jeopardize Medicare and Social Security.
61. We support reducing the national debt with little to no effect on Medicare and Social Security, and asking the wealthiest 2% to **increase their** share **of** the burden **in** of achieving that goal.

IX. INFRASTRUCTURE – FLOODING

62. We support adequate infrastructure planning and funding for all areas of the state, including those impacted by flooding.
63. We support protecting citizens, statewide, from the risk of flooding in the following ways: (1) flood-plain management that includes sensible use of the natural flood plain as a risk-reduction tool; (2) retention as a means of reducing the flood waters affecting a given population; and (3) construction of flood walls as needed.

X. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

64. We oppose the use of extraordinary rendition under any circumstances and likewise reject any rationale related to the so-called war on terrorism for infringing the right of *habeas corpus*.
65. We support the concept of “Net Neutrality” as we believe adequate internet access is a fundamental necessity in today’s society. All internet traffic should be treated equally without preference being set by internet service providers who may charge premiums or reduce speeds for certain types of content.

XI. FOREIGN RELATIONS

66. We oppose preventive military action and when or if war becomes necessary, our troops should only be deployed in adequate numbers, with adequate training **and** equipment, **and with attainable and specific military goals**.
67. We oppose the use of torture and support the U.S. government following the Geneva Conventions and the U.S. becoming a signatory of the International Criminal Court at The Hague.

68. We oppose the implementation of trade agreements **or United States imposed tariffs** if they negatively impact American jobs, do not address currency manipulation practices by other countries, or potentially reduce our nation's sovereignty by allowing foreign powers to dictate U.S. law and policies through the World Trade Organization or other entities. Trade agreements should promote "fair" trade and not simply "free" trade. Additionally, existing trade agreements should be reviewed to ensure that American companies and citizens fairly benefit from the agreement.
69. We believe military intervention to change or prop up another country's form of government very rarely serves America's interests, those peoples' long-term interests or the interests of humanity.
70. We oppose world government and recognize that carefully crafted international cooperation can benefit the United States, its people and the world.
- 71. We oppose international agreements that sacrifice the interests of American workers to multinational corporations.**
72. Transparency should apply to agreements between governments, where possible.
73. We invite all the world's peoples to join us in peacefully promoting stronger governmental and social guarantees of religious liberty, including government not respecting an establishment of religion or restricting the free exercise thereof, and including the right to worship as one chooses.

XII. NATURAL RESOURCES

74. We oppose any attempt to eliminate the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or reduce its budget to such a level that it cannot adequately function or operate.
75. We support a more comprehensive state policy on oil and gas drilling with respect to impacts on land, water, housing and other infrastructure.
76. We oppose the government investing in and developing the infrastructure necessary to have our own natural gas and crude oil refining facilities.
77. We do support continued efforts to ensure that the transport of gas and crude through the state is more environmentally secure and reliable and respectful of tribal and other property concerns.
78. We generally oppose the state legislature providing cost sharing and incentives to build and extend natural gas supply and distribution lines to every community in our state.
79. We do support production taxes whereby the costs to those who flare natural gas more closely match the science-based costs to society of flaring natural gas.

80. We support improving the free market's ability to secure profits for producers of renewable and less polluting energy resources.
81. We support research into utility pricing that more fully rewards business and home consumers who practice energy efficient and decentralized production of non-polluting energy, such as through co-generation, insulation, passive solar, wind, etc. without sacrificing baseload capability.
82. We ask the state legislature and Congress to significantly increase funding for research and development in new, cleaner and/or renewable fuels.
83. We oppose government action to eliminate coal, oil or natural gas as energy sources and oppose eliminating environmentally and geologically responsible fracking. We also oppose any government preferences or subsidies for these methods over other energy products. We favor market-based solutions that incorporate more of the pollution costs of energy consumption into the pricing of energy production.
84. We support a prohibition on oil and gas drilling on public-owned lands in the North Dakota badlands as well as implementation of an accountable review by appropriate state and federal agencies of every drilling permit application within two miles of places such as national and state parks, historic site, and wildlife refuges, to insure land use appropriate for neighboring land uses.
85. We support increased oversight and enforcement of the laws on dumping of toxic and radioactive waste. Furthermore, we support the study of additional means of cataloguing, tracking, disposal, and containment of toxic and radioactive materials.
86. We support the use of oil and other mineral extraction taxes to help fund state government and to build fiscal reserves during periods of strong commodity prices in order to help supplement state funding gaps during periods of lower commodity prices. It is important to maintain responsible fiscal management of these funds so as to not incur extreme budget imbalances, such as those witnessed during the recent legislative sessions. We support an oil extraction tax of at least 6.5%.
87. We oppose the Keystone XL Pipeline **additional energy pipelines** until safety studies are fully completed and operations would fully comply with Federal regulations.

XIII. Small Businesses

88. We seek out initiatives to lower the costs to small businesses of tax preparation, ~~labor~~, regulatory compliance, insurance, etc.
89. We support initiatives that assist the creation of new small businesses.

90. In general, we support small businesses having more lead time to achieve compliance with new government regulations.

91. We oppose any government regulation or tax on small businesses not necessary to achieve a vital purpose that can be achieved through other means.

XIV. EDUCATION

92. We support a strong financing package for Pre-K through the University level.

93. We are committed to strong state financial support allowing for a reduction in school property tax while at the same time allowing local school boards adequate authority to fund a basic education program.

94. All children have the right to elementary education, with goals established by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction. All children should receive elementary and secondary education, including the option of free, high-quality, public instruction. All North Dakota citizens who earn a North Dakota high school diploma should receive one year of free tuition and one year of half tuition (to be used over their lifetime) at a North Dakota University System institution for which they meet the admission standards.

95. We strongly believe in local choice regarding education. The primary responsibility of the state government is insuring ample and fair funding consistent with equal opportunity as well as setting minimum core standards. The primary responsibility of the federal government is insuring compliance with constitutional requirements for equal treatment under the law. Encouraging, or if necessary conducting, research and demonstration in education are essential functions of both state and federal government.

96. We support universal access to early childhood education and the expansion of Head Start.

97. The provision of before-school and after-school learning programs should be at the discretion of school districts but state funding should account for this need.

98. We support all children having consistent access to qualified school nurses.

99. We support state funding so that the salaries of public elementary, secondary and post-secondary teachers are regionally and nationally competitive.

100. Parents and guardians enjoy the right and responsibility for the religious instruction of their children, and the primary responsibility for moral education, with minimal government interference. While parents should be able to choose the form of education their children receive and while government should allow and fund some research into alternatives to public education as chosen by parents, funding those alternatives, except for the purpose of temporary research to improve public schools, is not an essential government function.

101. Public school children should be allowed to engage or not to engage in voluntary prayer and voluntary religious expression in appropriate times and places during the school day, as long as those in public employment do not restrict First Amendment freedoms by publicly treating one form of religion more favorably than another. School children should not be restricted in their rights in appropriate times and places to acknowledge their Creator, the American flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, the Declaration of Independence and the constitutions of the United States and North Dakota.

XV. SECURITY FROM CRIME

102. We recognize the necessity of adequate funding for police, soldiers, judges and similar public servants.

~~We support state funding to partly bridge the gap so that police officer salaries are regionally and nationally competitive.~~

103. We favor increased support of law enforcement through funding and professionalization **including implicit bias and anti-racism training**, to improve the safety of our communities, our persons, and our property.

XVI. CHILDCARE

104. We call on the government to scrutinize and reform where feasible any existing laws or regulations that impede the development of professional childcare services throughout North Dakota. Only if necessary, after that has been done, do we support partial subsidies of educational and training opportunities to child care workers, grants to licensed child care providers to assist with facilities and equipment, and, if necessary, child care vouchers for employed or job-seeking single parents.

XVII. IMMIGRATION

105. We support expanded legal immigration, with preference given to those who gain employment with a small business, while also tightening checks against criminality.

106. We support punishment of adults who commit the crime of illegal immigration, up to and including imprisonment and deportation.

107. We support improved border security based on practical evidence. ~~not showmanship.~~

108. We believe local law enforcement agencies should retain ultimate authority in deciding whether and how to cooperate with federal immigration officials in particular cases. Generally local authorities know best how to work with their communities.

109. We support significant fines and potential prison terms for employers who knowingly fail to gather documentation of their workers' authorization and call for stronger federal enforcement of such immigration and employment laws, especially in those states with labor intensive agriculture.

110. While we generally support freedom of movement for labor, trade and capital, we recognize the need for careful government regulation of our borders. We oppose open borders.

111. We oppose regulation of immigration based on race or religious affiliation.

~~112.~~ We support a law **legislation, not only executive actions**, which offers a pathway to citizenship for those who were eligible under the DACA program, ~~and not through executive action to implement similar programs.~~

XVIII. INTERNAL DEM-NPL PARTY PRINCIPLES

113. We support holding a policy briefing between candidates and party members who have promoted policies reflected in the party platform and resolutions after the state convention concludes.

114. We support using platform/policy discussions to rejuvenate the party at the precinct level, with anyone who can speak to the issues being invited to take part in these meetings.

115. We support holding a dedicated district meeting every six months, at which time platform/policy issues would be the featured topic. Furthermore, these meetings should be advertised as being free and open to the public and place on the calendar appearing on the state party's website.

116. We support revamping the state party website so that there will be the names and contact information of district officers.

117. We support indexing by subject as a way to feature the party platform and resolutions on the state website so that interested parties can more easily navigate the document.

118. We support developing a list of party members knowledgeable about policy specifics to serve as contacts for candidates who need briefing on specific issues.