

Alaska Democratic Party 2010 Platform

MOVING ALASKA FORWARD

The Alaska Democratic Party moves our state forward by fighting for the best interests of all Alaskans, regardless of their station or position in life. We are committed to fairness, hard work, integrity, and personal responsibility. We strive for economic opportunity and prosperity. We honor good citizenship and patriotism. We value our families and their communities.

In order to enhance the quality of life for all Alaskans, we seek to elect and appoint Alaskans who demonstrate a commitment to the public interest instead of private or special interests. We recognize that what unites each of us as Alaskans is as important as what defines us as individuals.

RENEWING THE ALASKAN DREAM

Equality. We are committed to the protection of full civil and equal rights for all people and the continued efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination.

Privacy. Alaskans' rights to privacy must be defended from all acts of intrusion. We support the right to confidentiality of identity, personal data, actions and movement. Alaskans must be guaranteed the freedom to make and act on personal decisions regarding religion, reproduction, medical care, and marriage and life partners. We are committed to the privacy of medical records.

Constitutional Rights. The United States and Alaska Constitutions confer certain individual rights, including the rights to freedom of speech, assembly, press, and religion, to responsibly keep and bear arms, prompt arraignment and trial, privacy, and freedom from illegal searches and seizures. We believe in the separation of church and state and that all levels of government must protect these rights.

Resources. Alaska's economic future depends on responsible development and investment in our state's diverse and abundant human and natural resources. We support resource-based primary industries like fishing, timber, mining, and agriculture that sustain and nourish Alaska families. We are committed to environmentally and culturally responsible exploration and development of our vast mineral, natural gas, and oil resources. We must take a leadership role in research and development of renewable and sustainable forms of energy, new industry, new products, and new ideas.

We are committed to Alaska-based ownership and maximum local participation in North Pacific fisheries, with a fair share for crewmembers; the protection and sustainable harvest of wild stock fisheries, and the development and aggressive marketing of value-added seafood products.

We are committed to a healthy and sustainable forest products industry based on the scientific principles of multiple use and adaptive management. We support sustainable tourism in Alaska.

Alaska's ownership interest in its lands must be vigorously protected, but not to the detriment of private property owners' rights.

Local communities must have the opportunity to participate in the management and protection of local resources to the maximum extent practicable. The voices of Alaska's indigenous peoples and their respective traditional ecological knowledge and cultural practices are critical to this process

RENEWING ALASKA COMMUNITIES

Education. Alaskans deserve a world-class educational system which ensures our quality of life and economic future. We support a comprehensive, fully supported and equitable public education system. Alaska's educational system must reflect the cultures and ways of life of the people, provide an educational environment free from bullying, empower the individual, and enrich the community.

Our system must include programs to prepare all children for school. A basic education provides instruction on core principles of citizenship, the importance of an informed electorate, civil discourse, and community engagement. It must also promote quality public education for all of Alaska's children and promote life-long educational opportunities through early childhood education, vocational training, and post-secondary curriculums. Additionally, it must provide a progressive university system that includes graduate and research programs. These systems must be supported by comprehensive library, museum, physical education, fine arts, humanities, and public communication, and technological programs.

We recognize the value of the fresh ideas brought forward by young Alaskans and seek to encourage their community involvement and empower them to become tomorrow's leaders.

Jobs. The development of a ready and well-trained Alaska workforce is crucial to the survival of our economy. Alaska jobs should be filled by Alaskans, and Alaskan businesses should not have to look beyond Alaska to find qualified applicants. We are committed to the goal of full employment. Every worker is entitled to a living wage and a safe, healthy, harassment-free workplace that promotes equal employment opportunity in all terms and conditions of employment. We expect the enforcement of nondiscrimination laws and the promotion of Alaska preference in hiring.

Environment. Quality of life and a robust economy in Alaska depends on a clean and healthy environment. Environmental protection is essential to provide clean air, land, and water for all Alaskans. We must prevent pollution through support of green technologies and infrastructure, energy efficiency, waste reduction, recycling, and proper management and cleanup of hazardous and solid waste. We support the use of verifiable scientific research to ensure environmental protection and appropriate responses to climate change and environmental degradation. We support open spaces, trails, and recreational opportunities. We support efficient, full and responsible funding for environmental protection.

Health & Social Services. Access to quality, affordable health care is a fundamental human right. No Alaskan should worry about losing their home to provide health care for their family. We support the reduction of substance abuse through prevention and treatment. There must be zero tolerance of physical, sexual, and mental abuse and neglect of persons of any age. We must resolve the inadequate Medicare fee schedules for compensating Alaskan health care providers to stop their denial of services to Alaska's seniors. Resources must be placed in the prevention and treatment of chronic disease and social ills, including alcoholism, substance abuse, diabetes, and domestic violence.

Veterans and Active Duty Personnel. Alaska's military veterans and active duty personnel should be treated like the heroes that they are. Alaska veterans should have access to the nearest and best medical treatment. We support the construction of regional modern military and veteran (VA) healthcare facilities and will work to ensure the availability of all cutting-edge medical and psychological treatment. Members of the National Guard and military reserves should have their civilian jobs protected while overseas. Families of service men and women must also receive the appreciation, support, and services that they have earned. Our Reservists, National Guard, and their families have the right to reasonable and humane consideration in regard to multiple deployments to war zones.

Safety. All Alaskans should be secure from acts of crime. The criminal justice system should be fully funded, including alternative programs and training for personnel to ensure equitable law enforcement, courts, defense, prosecution, and a progressive corrections system. Sentences should be fair, just, and non-discriminatory. Victims should receive restitution and have the right to participate in the criminal justice process. The correctional system shall be publicly owned and operated within the State of Alaska. Efforts shall be made to incarcerate individuals at or near their home district.

Subsistence. Subsistence activities are part of the bedrock that makes Alaska a special place to call home. We support an Alaska constitutional amendment to guarantee subsistence activities of rural Alaskans. Subsistence policies must protect the customary and traditional use of renewable resources that are vital to protect and preserve the culture of Alaska's indigenous peoples.

Rural Life. We respect and support all rural Alaska communities, including their traditional cultural ways of life for current and future generations. We support equitable education and technological resources, adequate water, sewer and power generation systems, and public safety and health services for all of Alaska's people. We support state recognition of Alaska Native tribal governments and the continued cooperation between state and tribal courts in combining resources and experiences for the mutual, quality protection of Native children. These tribal institutions are an integral part of Alaska society and an important resource. Rural Alaskans deserve access to affordable, reliable, and environmentally sustainable energy. We support continued development of healthy, vibrant rural communities through the creation of economic opportunity.

RENEWING OUR ALASKA LEADERSHIP

State Government. The role of state government is to provide for the health, safety, education, and wellbeing of all Alaskans; to develop and protect Alaska's human and natural resources; to protect the assets entrusted to the people of Alaska; and to provide and maintain essential infrastructure and a safe and healthy workplace. It is also the role of the state to create prosperity and jobs by partnering with business and creating conditions for ingenuity and local businesses to flourish.

Open, Honest and Accountable Government. We insist on a government as good as the people it serves. We are committed to a vigilant effort to root out corruption wherever it exists.

We are committed to ethics reform and meaningful campaign finance reform that ensures that elected officials act ethically—not just within the law, but within the spirit of the law.

We are committed to making certain our state's leaders serve the people's interests, not special interests

Government should encourage public officials and private citizens to work together for the common good. This requires public participation and access to government proceedings so that all debates and decisions occur in an open, respectful, and non-intimidating public forum.

State Fiscal Policy. We support the development of a responsible, long-term fiscal plan that considers all the tools available to provide for essential government services, which includes community revenue sharing and protects the Alaska Permanent Fund and its dividends. The Alaska Permanent Fund should be invested in a socially and environmentally responsible way whenever prudently possible. We support the development of Alaska's resources for the maximum benefit of Alaskans.

State Energy Policy. Alaska's economic future depends upon access to affordable and sustainable energy sources. We support development of environmentally responsible energy technologies, efficient use of Alaska's energy resources, enhanced energy efficiency and conservation, development of renewable resources, and ongoing research to support these goals.

RENEWING OUR ALASKA DEMOCRACY

Labor Relations. We strongly support the right of every Alaskan to choose to join and/or organize a union, to negotiate and ratify contracts in good faith and to participate in union activities without fear of reprisal. Negotiated contracts must be honored and enforced free of discrimination by employees, employers, and all branches of government.

Business and International Trade. The development and growth of Alaskan-owned businesses, cooperatives, and industry are the backbone of our economy. We support the promotion of sustainable new businesses, cooperatives, commerce, and industries through the responsible development of our natural and human resources and the promotion of in-state, value-added processing of resources with revenues reinvested in Alaska.

We encourage international trade with those nations which allow their workers to bargain collectively for living wages and benefits and which also protect the environment.

National Defense and International Relations. The Alaska Democratic Party supports a strong national defense that supplements, but does not replace, diplomacy as a means to advance international peace and economic prosperity.

We believe that the U.S. government should support multinational efforts through the United Nations and elsewhere to stop genocide, reduce hunger and disease, protect human rights, and to promote justice, prosperity and peace in the world. We are committed to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

*Adopted at the State Convention of the Alaska Democratic Party
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