



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2016 REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORM

“Making America Great Again”

The following is excerpted from the Republican Party Platform adopted by the delegates to the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, on July 18, 2016.

We believe in American exceptionalism. We believe the United States of America is unlike any other nation on earth. We believe America is exceptional because of our historic role — first as refuge, then as defender, and now as exemplar of liberty for the world to see. We affirm — as did the Declaration of Independence — that all are created equal, endowed by their creator with inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

We believe in the Constitution as our founding document. We believe the Constitution was written not as a flexible document, but as our enduring covenant.

We believe our constitutional system — limited government, separation of powers, Federalism, and the rights of the people — must be preserved, uncompromised for future generations.

We believe political freedom and economic freedom are indivisible. When political freedom and economic freedom are separated, both are in peril; when united, they are invincible.

We believe that people are the ultimate resource — and that the people, not the government, are the best stewards of our country’s God-given natural resources.

As Americans and as Republicans, we wish for peace — so we insist on strength. We will make America safe. We seek friendship with all peoples and all nations, but we recognize and are prepared to deal with evil in the world.

Americans have earned and deserve a strong and healthy economy.

Our standing in world affairs has declined significantly — our enemies no longer fear us, and our friends no longer trust us. People want and expect an America that is the most powerful and respected country on the face of the earth.

The men and women of our military remain the world’s best. They have been shortchanged in numbers, equipment, and benefits by a commander in chief who treats the armed forces and our veterans as a necessary inconvenience.

The President and the Democratic Party have dismantled Americans’ system of health care. They have replaced it with a costly and complicated scheme that limits choices and takes away our freedom.

The President and the Democratic Party have abandoned their promise of being accountable to the American people.

They have nearly doubled the size of the national debt.

They refuse to control our borders but try to control our schools, farms, businesses, and even our religious institutions. They have directly attacked the production of American energy and the industry-related jobs that have sustained families and communities.

The President has been regulating to death a free market economy that he does not like and does not understand. He defies the laws of the United States by refusing to enforce those with which he does not agree. And he appoints judges who legislate from the bench rather than apply the law.

We, as Republicans and Americans, cannot allow this to continue.

This means removing the power from unelected, unaccountable government.

This means relieving the burden and expense of punishing government regulations.

And this means returning to the people and the States the control that belongs to them.

Restoring the American Dream

Rebuilding the Economy and Creating Jobs. Prosperity provides the means by which citizens and their families can maintain their independence from government, raise their children by their own values, practice their faith, and build communities of cooperation and mutual respect. It is also the foundation for our Nation's global leadership, for it is the vigor of our economy which makes possible our military strength and our national security. Pundits and Democrats tell us that we should accept the new normal of a slow-growing economy. We repudiate the absurd idea this is the best America can do. We offer instead our vision of an opportunity society based on the economics of inclusion.

Fair and Simple Taxes for Growth. Republicans consider the establishment of a pro-growth tax code a moral imperative. Wherever tax rates penalize thrift or discourage investment, they must be lowered. Wherever current provisions of the code are disincentives for economic growth, they must be changed. We will eliminate as many special interest provisions and loopholes as possible and curb corporate welfare, especially where their erosion of the tax base has created pressure for higher rates. We will seek simplicity and clarity so that every taxpayer can understand how much of their income is consumed by the Federal Government.

Our Tax Principles. We oppose retroactive taxation. We condemn attempts by activist judges at any level of government to seize the power of the purse from the people's elected representatives by ordering higher taxes. We oppose tax policies that deliberately divide Americans or promote class warfare. Because of the vital role of religious organizations, charities, and fraternal benevolent societies in fostering generosity and patriotism, they should not be subject to taxation, and donations to them should remain deductible. Any value added tax or national sales tax must be tied to the simultaneous repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment, which established the Federal income tax.

A Competitive America. Competitiveness equals jobs. American businesses now face the world's highest corporate tax rates. We propose to level the international playing field by lowering the corporate tax rate to be on a par with, or below, the rates of other industrial nations. We endorse the recommendation of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, as well as the current Administration's Export Council, to switch to a territorial system of taxation so that profits earned and taxed abroad may be repatriated for job-creating investment here at home. We believe American companies should be headquartered in America. We should reduce barriers to accomplishing that goal.

A Winning Trade Policy. We envision a worldwide multilateral agreement among nations committed to the principles of open markets, what has been called a "Reagan Economic Zone," in which free trade will truly be fair trade for all concerned.

We need better negotiated trade agreements that put America first. We cannot allow foreign governments to limit American access to their markets while stealing our designs, patents, brands, know-how, and technology. We cannot allow China to continue its currency manipulation, exclusion of U.S. products from government purchases, and subsidization of Chinese companies to thwart American imports. A Republican President will insist on parity in trade and stand ready to implement countervailing duties if other countries refuse to cooperate. At the same time, we look to broaden our trade agreements with countries which share our values and commitment to fairness, along with transparency in our commercial and business practices.

Freeing Financial Markets. The Republican vision for American banking calls for establishing transparent, efficient markets where consumers can obtain loans they need at reasonable rates based on market conditions. Unfortunately, in response to the financial institutions crisis of 2008–2009, the Democratic-controlled Congress enacted the Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, otherwise known as Dodd–Frank. Rather than address the cause of the crisis — the government's own housing policies — the new law extended government control over the economy by creating new unaccountable bureaucracies. Community banks should be relieved of excessive regulations.

The worst of Dodd–Frank is the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, deliberately designed to be a rogue agency. It answers to neither Congress nor the Executive, has its own guaranteed funding outside the appropriations process, and uses its slush fund to steer settlements to politically favored groups. If the Bureau is not abolished, it should be subjected to congressional appropriation. In that way, consumer protection in the financial markets can be advanced through measures that are both effective and constitutional.

America on the Move. We propose to remove from the Highway Trust Fund programs that should not be the business of the Federal Government. More than a quarter of the Fund's spending is diverted from its original purpose. One fifth of its funds are spent on mass transit, an inherently local affair that we will remove legal roadblocks to public-private partnership agreements that can save the taxpayers' money and bring outside investment to meet a community's needs. With most of the States increasing their own funding for transportation, we oppose a further increase in the Federal gas tax.

Amtrak is an extremely expensive railroad for the American taxpayers, who must subsidize every ticket. The Federal Government should allow private ventures to provide passenger service in the northeast

corridor. The same holds true with regard to high-speed and intercity rail across the country. We reaffirm our intention to end Federal support for boondoggles like California's high-speed train to nowhere.

Building the Future: Technology. We want to create a business climate that rewards risk and promotes innovation, a learning system that gives Americans the skills needed to seize the opportunities of the twenty-first century, and an international order that maintains a fair and open global market for America's goods and services. We intend to advance policies that protect data privacy while fostering innovation and growth and ensuring the free flow of data across borders.

We intend to facilitate access to spectrum by paving the way for high-speed, next-generation broadband deployment and competition on the Internet and for Internet services. We want government to encourage the sharing economy and on-demand platforms to compete in an open market, and we believe public policies should encourage the innovation and competition that are essential for an Internet of Things to thrive.

We encourage public-private partnerships to provide predictable support for connecting rural areas so that every American can fully participate in the global economy.

Workplace Freedom for a Twenty-First Century Workforce. Our first priority is getting people back to work by fostering the kind of growth that creates jobs. Technology has already created jobs that did not exist 15 years ago, and today's workers need flexibility and family-friendly options to make the most of them, especially portability in pension plans and health insurance. We intend to encourage those trends by bringing labor law into the twenty-first century. All workers, including union members, must be free to accept raises and rewards without veto power from union officials. We support the right of States to enact right-to-work laws and call for a national law to protect the economic liberty of the modern workforce. Minimum wage is an issue that should be handled at the State and local level.

Reducing the Federal Debt. We must impose firm caps on future debt, accelerate the repayment of the trillions we now owe in order to reaffirm our principles of responsible and limited government, and remove the burdens we are placing on future generations.

A Rebirth of Constitutional Government

We the People. Merit and hard work should determine advancement in our society, so we reject unfair preferences, quotas, and set-asides as forms of discrimination. Our most urgent task as a party is to restore the American people's faith in their government by electing a President who will enforce duly enacted laws, honor constitutional limits on executive authority, and return credibility to the Oval Office. We need a Republican President who will end abuses of power by departments and agencies, like the IRS [Internal Revenue Service] and the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], and by the White House itself.

The Judiciary. A critical threat to our country's constitutional order is an activist Judiciary that usurps powers properly reserved to the people through other branches of government. Only a Republican President will appoint judges who respect the rule of law expressed within the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, including the inalienable right to life and the laws of nature and nature's God, as did the late Justice Antonin Scalia.

Defending Marriage Against an Activist Judiciary. Traditional marriage and family, based on marriage between one man and one woman, is the foundation for a free society and has for millennia been entrusted with rearing children and instilling cultural values. We condemn the Supreme Court’s ruling in *United States v. Windsor* [2013], which wrongly removed the ability of Congress to define marriage policy in Federal law. We also condemn the Supreme Court’s lawless ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* [2015]. In *Obergefell*, five unelected lawyers robbed 320 million Americans of their legitimate constitutional authority to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

The First Amendment: Religious Liberty. We pledge to defend the religious beliefs and rights of conscience of all Americans and to safeguard religious institutions against government control. We endorse Republican legislation which will bar government discrimination against individuals and businesses for acting on the belief that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. We support the right of the people to conduct their businesses in accordance with their religious beliefs and condemn public officials who have proposed boycotts against businesses that support traditional marriage. We support the public display of the Ten Commandments as a reflection of our history and our country’s Judeo-Christian heritage and further affirm the rights of religious students to engage in voluntary prayer at public school events and to have equal access to school facilities. We assert the First Amendment right of freedom of association for religious, private, service, and youth organizations to set their own membership standards.

The First Amendment: Constitutionally Protected Speech. We support repeal of Federal restrictions on political parties in *McCain–Feingold* [Bipartisan Campaign Act of 2002]; raising or repealing contribution limits; protecting the political speech of advocacy groups, corporations, and labor unions; and protecting political speech on the Internet. We likewise call for an end to the so-called Fairness Doctrine, and support free-market approaches to free speech unregulated by government. We believe the forced funding of political candidates through union dues and other mandatory contributions violates the First Amendment.

The Second Amendment: Our Right to Keep and Bear Arms. We salute the Republican Congress for defending the right to keep and bear arms by preventing the President from installing a new liberal majority on the Supreme Court. We support firearm reciprocity legislation to recognize the right of law-abiding Americans to carry firearms to protect themselves and their families in all 50 States. We support constitutional carry statutes and salute the States that have passed them. We oppose ill-conceived laws that would restrict magazine capacity or ban the sale of the most popular and common modern rifle. We oppose Federal licensing or registration of law-abiding gun owners, registration of ammunition, and restoration of the ill-fated Clinton gun ban [of assault weapons].

The Fifth Amendment: Protecting Human Life. We assert the sanctity of human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution and legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment’s protections apply to children before birth.

We oppose the use of public funds to perform or promote abortion or to fund organizations, like Planned Parenthood, so long as they provide or refer for elective abortions or sell fetal body parts rather than provide health care. We urge all States and Congress to make it a crime to acquire, transfer, or sell fetal

tissues from elective abortions for research, and we call on Congress to enact a ban on any sale of fetal body parts. We will not fund or subsidize health care that includes abortion coverage.

We support the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life. We oppose the nonconsensual withholding or withdrawal of care or treatment, including food and water, from individuals with disabilities, newborns, the elderly, or the infirm, just as we oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide. We oppose embryonic stem cell research. We oppose Federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. We oppose Federal funding for harvesting embryos and call for a ban on human cloning.

Honest Elections and the Right to Vote. We urge State and local officials to take all appropriate steps to allow voters to cast their ballots in a timely manner. We support legislation to require proof of citizenship when registering to vote and secure photo ID when voting. We strongly oppose litigation against States exercising their sovereign authority to enact such laws.

America's Natural Resources: Agriculture, Energy, and the Environment

Abundant Harvests. Under a Republican President, America's trade negotiators will insist that our global trading partners adhere to science-based standards with regard to food and health regulations. We will not tolerate the use of bogus science and scare tactics to bar our products from foreign markets, nor will we allow insufficient health and safety standards for products imported for our consumption.

We oppose the mandatory labeling of genetically modified food, which has proven to be safe, healthy, and a literal life-saver for millions in the developing world.

During the last eight years of a Democratic Administration, nearly all the work requirements for able-bodied adults, instituted by our landmark welfare reform of 1996, have been removed. We will restore those provisions and, to correct a mistake made when the Food Stamp program was first created in 1964, separate the administration of SNAP from the Department of Agriculture.

A New Era in Energy. America's energy sector can guarantee the Nation's energy security for centuries to come if, instead of erecting roadblocks, government facilitates the creation of an all-of-the-above energy strategy.

We support the opening of public lands and the outer continental shelf to exploration and responsible production, even if these resources will not be immediately developed. Congress should give authority to State regulators to manage energy resources on federally controlled public lands within their respective borders.

Keeping energy in the earth will keep jobs out of reach of those who need them most. The current Administration's Clean Power Plan — the centerpiece of the President's war on coal — has been stayed by the Supreme Court. We will do away with it altogether. The Democratic Party does not understand that coal is an abundant, clean, affordable, reliable domestic energy resource. The Keystone Pipeline has become a symbol of everything wrong with the current Administration's ideological approach. After years of delay, the President killed it to satisfy environmental extremists. We intend to finish that pipeline and others as part of our commitment to North American energy security.

We respect the States' proven ability to regulate the use of hydraulic fracturing, methane emissions, and horizontal drilling, and we will end the Administration's disregard of the Nuclear Waste Policy Act with respect to the long-term storage of nuclear waste.

Environmental Progress. Poverty, not wealth, is the gravest threat to the environment, while steady economic growth brings the technological advances which make environmental progress possible. The environmental establishment has become a self-serving elite, stuck in the mindset of the 1970s, subordinating the public's consensus to the goals of the Democratic Party. Their approach is based on shoddy science, scare tactics, and centralized command-and-control regulation. We propose to shift responsibility for environmental regulation from the Federal bureaucracy to the States and to transform the EPA into an independent bipartisan commission with structural safeguards against politicized science.

We will enforce the original intent of the Clean Water Act, not its distortion by EPA regulations. We will likewise forbid the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide, something never envisioned when Congress passed the Clean Air Act. We will restore to Congress the authority to set the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and modernize the permitting process under the National Environmental Policy Act so it can no longer invite frivolous lawsuits, thwart sorely needed projects, kill jobs, and strangle growth.

Information concerning a changing climate, especially projections into the long-range future, must be based on dispassionate analysis of hard data. The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a political mechanism, not an unbiased scientific institution. Its unreliability is reflected in its intolerance toward scientists and others who dissent from its orthodoxy. We reject the agendas of both the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, which represent only the personal commitments of their signatories.

Government Reform

Balancing the Budget. We will fight for Congress to adopt, and for the States to ratify, a balanced budget amendment which imposes a cap limiting spending to the appropriate historical average percentage of our Nation's gross domestic product while requiring a supermajority for any tax increase, with exceptions only for war or legitimate emergencies.

Preserving Medicare and Medicaid. We intend to save Medicare by modernizing it, empowering its participants, and putting it on a secure financial footing. We will preserve the promise of Medicaid as well by making that program, designed for 1965 medicine, a vehicle for good health in an entirely new era.

We propose these reforms: Impose no changes for persons 55 or older. Give others the option of traditional Medicare or transition to a premium-support model designed to strengthen patient choice, promote cost-saving competition among providers, and better guard against the fraud and abuse that now diverts billions of dollars every year away from patient care. Guarantee to every enrollee an income-adjusted contribution toward a plan of their choice, with catastrophic protection. Without disadvantaging present retirees or those nearing retirement, set a more realistic age for eligibility in light of today's longer life span.

Medicaid is the next frontier of welfare reform. It is simply too big and too flawed to be administered from Washington. We applaud the Republican governors and State legislators who have undertaken the hard work of modernizing Medicaid. We will give them a free hand to do so by block-granting the program without strings.

Saving Social Security. As the party of America's future, we accept the responsibility to preserve and modernize a system of retirement security forged in an old industrial era beyond the memory of most Americans. As Republicans, we oppose tax increases and believe in the power of markets to create wealth and to help secure the future of our Social Security system.

Protecting Internet Freedom. We will consistently support Internet policies that allow people and private enterprise to thrive, without providing new and expanded government powers to tax and regulate so that the Internet does not become the vehicle for a dramatic expansion of government power. The only way to safeguard or improve these systems is through the private sector. The Internet's free market needs to be free and open to all ideas and competition without the government or service providers picking winners and losers.

Immigration and the Rule of Law. America's immigration policy must serve the national interest of the United States, and the interests of American workers must be protected over the claims of foreign nationals seeking the same jobs.

We oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by breaking the law, have disadvantaged those who have obeyed it. Our highest priority must be to secure our borders and all ports of entry and to enforce our immigration laws. That is why we support building a wall along our southern border and protecting all ports of entry. We insist upon workplace enforcement of verification systems so that more jobs can be available to all legal workers. Use of the E-verify program — an Internet-based system that verifies the employment authorization and identity of employees — must be made mandatory nationwide.

We support stiffer penalties, such as a mandatory minimum sentence of five years, for any illegal alien who illegally re-enters our Nation after already having been deported. Because "sanctuary cities" violate Federal law and endanger their own citizens, they should not be eligible for Federal funding.

In light of both current needs and historic practice, we urge the reform of our guest worker programs to eliminate fraud, improve efficiency, and ensure they serve the national interest. To ensure our national security, refugees who cannot be carefully vetted cannot be admitted to the country, especially those whose homelands have been the breeding grounds for terrorism.

Internal Revenue Service. Many good civil servants work at the IRS, but the agency itself is toxic. Its leadership employs known tax delinquents, rehires workers previously fired for misconduct, spends user fees without congressional oversight, and awards bonuses for customer service that would put any private company out of business. Worst of all, the IRS has become an ideological attack dog for the worst elements of today's Democratic Party. It systematically targets conservative, pro-life, and libertarian organizations, harassing them with repeated audits and denying their tax exempt status. Its commissioner has lied to Congress, hidden evidence, and stonewalled investigations. He should be impeached by the House of Representatives and convicted by the Senate. We support making the Federal tax code so simple and easy to understand that the IRS becomes obsolete and can be abolished.

Regulation: The Quiet Tyranny. Over-regulation is the quiet tyranny of the “nanny state.” It hamstring American businesses and hobbles economic growth. We are determined to make regulations minimally intrusive, confined to their legal mandate, and respectful toward the creation of new and small businesses. We will revisit existing laws that delegate too much authority to regulatory agencies and review all current regulations for possible reform or repeal.

Great American Families, Education, Health Care, and Criminal Justice

Marriage, Family, and Society. The data and the facts lead to an inescapable conclusion: Every child deserves a married mom and dad. Our laws and our government’s regulations should recognize marriage as the union of one man and one woman and actively promote married family life as the basis of a stable and prosperous society. We do not accept the Supreme Court’s redefinition of marriage, and we urge its reversal, whether through judicial reconsideration or a constitutional amendment returning control over marriage to the States. We oppose government discrimination against businesses or entities which decline to sell items or services to individuals for activities that go against their religious views about such activities.

Education: A Chance for Every Child. Parents have a right to direct their children’s education, care, and upbringing. We support a constitutional amendment to protect that right from interference by States, the Federal Government, or international bodies such as the United Nations. We reject a one-size-fits-all approach to education and support a broad range of choices for parents and children at the State and local level. We likewise repeat our longstanding opposition to the imposition of national standards and assessments, encourage the parents and educators who are implementing alternatives to Common Core, and congratulate the States which have successfully repealed it. We encourage State legislatures to offer the Bible in a literature curriculum as an elective in America’s high schools.

Choice in Education. We support options for learning, including home-schooling, career and technical education, private or parochial schools, magnet schools, charter schools, online learning, and early-college high schools. We especially support the innovative financing mechanisms that make options available to all children: education savings accounts, vouchers, and tuition tax credits.

To ensure that all students have access to the mainstream of American life, we support the English First approach and oppose divisive programs that limit students’ ability to advance in American society. We renew our call for replacing “family planning” programs for teens with sexual risk avoidance education that sets abstinence until marriage as the responsible and respected standard of behavior.

Improving Higher Education. In State schools, the trustees have a responsibility to the taxpayers to ensure that their enormous investment is not abused for political indoctrination. We call on State officials to preserve our public colleges, universities, and trade schools as places of learning and the exchange of ideas, not zones of intellectual intolerance or “safe zones,” as if college students need protection from the free exchange of ideas.

College Costs. The Federal Government should not be in the business of originating student loans. Private sector participation in student financing should be restored. Any regulation that increases college costs must be challenged to balance its worth against its negative economic impact on students and their families.

Restoring Patient Control and Preserving Quality in Health Care. Any honest agenda for improving health care must start with repeal of the dishonestly named Affordable Care Act of 2010: Obamacare. To simplify the system for both patients and providers, we will reduce mandates and enable insurers and providers of care to increase health care options and contain costs. We will return to the States their historic role of regulating local insurance markets, limit Federal requirements on both private insurance and Medicaid, and call on State officials to reconsider the costly medical mandates, imposed under their own laws, that price millions of low-income families out of the insurance market. To guarantee first-rate care for the needy, we propose to block grant Medicaid and other payments and to assist all patients, including those with pre-existing conditions, to obtain coverage in a robust consumer market. We look to the growth of Health Savings Accounts and Health Reimbursement Accounts that empower patients and advance choice in health care.

Protecting Individual Conscience in Health Care. We support the ability of all organizations to provide, purchase, or enroll in health care coverage consistent with their religious, moral, or ethical convictions without discrimination or penalty. We support the right of parents to determine the proper medical treatment and therapy for their minor children. We support the right of parents to consent to medical treatment for their minor children and urge enactment of legislation that would require parental consent for their daughter to be transported across State lines for abortion. Providers should not be permitted to unilaterally withhold services because a patient's life is deemed not worth living. American taxpayers should not be forced to fund abortion. We call for codification of the Hyde Amendment and its application across the government, including Obamacare. We call for a permanent ban on Federal funding and subsidies for abortion and health care plans that include abortion coverage.

Advancing Americans with Disabilities. Persons with disabilities are nearly twice as likely to be self-employed as the general population. To encourage their entrepreneurship, it makes sense to include them in the Small Business Administration's 8(a) certification program, which opens up Federal contracting for emerging businesses. Any restructuring of the tax code should consider ways in which companies can benefit from the talent and energy of their disabled employees.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has opened up unprecedented opportunities for many students. Congressional Republicans will lead in its reauthorization, as well as renewal of the Higher Education Act, which can offer students with disabilities increased access to the general curriculum. Our TIME Act (Transition to Integrated and Meaningful Employment) will modernize the Fair Labor Standards Act to encourage competitive employment for persons with disabilities.

Ensuring Safe Neighborhoods: Criminal Justice and Prison Reform. The Republican Party, a party of law and order, must make clear in words and action that every human life matters.

The over-federalization of criminal justice is one of many ways in which the government in Washington has intruded beyond its proper jurisdiction. In the past, judicial discretion about sentences led to serious mistakes concerning dangerous criminals. Mandatory minimum sentencing became an important tool for

keeping them off the streets. Modifications to it should be targeted toward particular categories, especially nonviolent offenders and persons with drug, alcohol, or mental health issues, and should require disclosure by the courts of any judicial departure from the State's sentencing requirements. The constitutionality of the death penalty is firmly settled by its explicit mention in the Fifth Amendment. We call for mandatory prison time for all assaults involving serious injury to law enforcement officers.

The Internet must not become a safe haven for predators. Pornography, with its harmful effects, especially on children, has become a public health crisis that is destroying the lives of millions. We encourage States to continue to fight this public menace and pledge our commitment to children's safety and well-being.

Combatting Drug Abuse. The progress made over the last three decades against drug abuse is eroding, whether for cultural reasons or for lack of national leadership. In many jurisdictions, marijuana is virtually legalized despite its illegality under Federal law. The misuse of prescription painkillers — opioids — is a related problem. Because over-prescription of drugs is such a large part of the problem, Republican legislation now allows Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage plans to limit patients to a single pharmacy. Congressional Republicans have also called upon the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to ensure that no physician will be penalized for limiting opioid prescriptions.

America Resurgent

Confronting the Dangers. Our Republican President's strategic vision will include the development of a balanced force to meet the diverse threats facing our Nation. We need a Reagan-era force that can fight and win two and one-half wars, ranging from counterterrorism to deterring major power aggressors.

We should abandon arms control treaties that benefit our adversaries without improving our national security. We must modernize nuclear weapons and their delivery platforms, end the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction, and rebuild relationships with our allies, who understand that as long as the U.S. nuclear arsenal is their shield, they do not need to engage in nuclear proliferation. We must secure our borders, enforce our immigration laws, and properly screen refugees and other immigrants entering from any country. In particular, we must apply special scrutiny to those foreign nationals seeking to enter the United States from terror-sponsoring countries or from regions associated with Islamic terrorism.

Supporting Our Troops: Standing by Our Heroes. Military families must be assured of the pay, health care, housing, education, and overall support they have earned. We must strengthen existing programs that offer families readjustment information and counseling, and we urge States to help by providing job programs, license reciprocity, one-stop service centers, and education. We support the all-volunteer force and oppose unnecessary policy changes, including compulsory national service and Selective Service registration of women for a possible future draft. We call for an objective review of the impact on readiness of the current Administration's ideology-based personnel policies, and will correct problems with appropriate administrative, legal, or legislative action. We reject the use of the military as a platform for social experimentation and will not accept or continue attempts to undermine military priorities and mission readiness. Military readiness should not be sacrificed on the altar of political correctness.

Honoring and Supporting Our Veterans: A Sacred Obligation. We will seek fundamental change in the VA's [Department of Veterans Affairs] senior leadership structure by placing Presidential appointees, rather than careerists, in additional positions of significant responsibility. The VA must strengthen and improve its efforts through partnerships with private enterprises, veteran service organizations, technology and innovation, and competitive bidding to enable the VA to better provide both quality and timely care along with all earned benefits to our nation's veterans and their families.

Challenges of a Changing Middle East. We consider the Administration's deal with Iran, to lift international sanctions and make hundreds of billions of dollars available to the Mullahs, a personal agreement between the President and his negotiating partners and non-binding on the next President.

The Obama Administration and its secretary of state so mishandled the Arab Spring that it destabilized the entire region. A Republican administration will restore our Nation's credibility. We must stand up for our friends, challenge our foes, and destroy ISIS [Islamic State of Iraq and Syria]. Hezbollah, controlling over 100,000 missiles in Lebanon, must be isolated and Lebanon's independence restored.

Our Unequivocal Support for Israel. Support for Israel is an expression of Americanism, and it is the responsibility of our government to advance policies that reflect Americans' strong desire for a relationship with no daylight between America and Israel. We recognize Jerusalem as the eternal and indivisible capital of the Jewish State and call for the American embassy to be moved there in fulfillment of U.S. law. We will ensure that Israel maintains a qualitative military edge over any and all adversaries. We reject the false notion that Israel is an occupier and specifically recognize that the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement is anti-Semitic in nature and seeks to destroy Israel.

U.S. Leadership in the Asian Pacific. We look toward the establishment of human rights for the people of North Korea. The United States will continue to demand the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons program with full accounting of its proliferation activities. We also pledge to counter any threats from the North Korean regime.

The return to Maoism by China's current rulers is not reason to disengage with the Chinese people or their institutions. We welcome students, tourists, and investors, who can see for themselves our vibrant American democracy and how real democracy works. We caution, however, against academic or cultural operations under the control of the Chinese Government and call upon American colleges to dissociate themselves from this increasing threat to academic freedom and honest research.

India is our geopolitical ally and a strategic trading partner. We encourage the Indian government to permit expanded foreign investment and trade, the key to rising living standards for those left out of their country's energetic economy.

Renewing the European Alliance. With the American people spending on defense, per capita, four times the amount spent by Europeans, we demand that our fellow members of NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] fulfill their commitments and meet their need for greater investment in their armed forces. We thank the several nations of Europe that have contributed to a united effort in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. Their support and sacrifice in the fight against Islamic terrorism will not be forgotten. We urge greater coordination in economic and security affairs between the United States and the republics of

Eastern Europe. We urge that Poland be granted visa waiver status, and we support placement of NATO troops in Poland.

For the people of Russia, we affirm our respect and our determination to maintain a friendship beyond the reach of those who wish to divide us. We have common imperatives: ending terrorism, combating nuclear proliferation, promoting trade, and more. We will meet the return of Russian belligerence with the same resolve that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. We will not accept any territorial change in Eastern Europe imposed by force, in Ukraine, Georgia, or elsewhere, and will use all appropriate constitutional measures to bring to justice the practitioners of aggression and assassination.

Family of the Americas. We express our solidarity with all the peoples of the Western Hemisphere. A Republican President will never embrace a Marxist dictator, in Venezuela or anywhere else. The current Administration's "opening to Cuba" was a shameful accommodation to the demands of its tyrants. It will only strengthen their military dictatorship. We call on the Congress to uphold current U.S. law which sets conditions for the lifting of sanctions on the island: legalization of political parties, an independent media, and free and fair internationally supervised elections.

Sovereign American Leadership in International Organizations. Our continued participation in the United Nations should be contingent upon the enactment of long-overdue changes in the way that institution functions. American taxpayers, the chief funders of the UN, deserve full transparency in the financial operations of its overpaid bureaucrats.

We oppose ratification of international agreements whose long-range implications are ominous or unclear. We do not support the UN Convention on Women's Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the UN Arms Trade Treaty, as well as various declarations from the UN Conference on Environment and Development. We have deep reservations about the regulatory, legal, and tax regimes inherent in the Law of the Sea Treaty.

America's Generosity: International Assistance that Makes a Difference. Foreign aid must serve America's interests first. Foreign assistance programs must not only project the best of American values, but must work to create self-sustainability and leverage the resources and capacity of the private sector. The integrity of our country's foreign assistance program has been compromised by the current Administration's attempt to impose on foreign recipients. We pledge to reverse this course, encouraging more involvement by the most effective aid organizations and trusting developing peoples to build their futures through their own values.

Liberty to Captives: Combatting Human Trafficking. We call for increased diplomatic efforts and accountability for foreign governments to prosecute traffickers, including penalties for any public officials who may be complicit in this devastating crime. We will highlight the need to stop slave labor, taking steps to prevent overseas labor contractors who exploit foreign workers from supporting military bases abroad or exporting goods to the United States.

Facing Twenty-First Century Threats: Cybersecurity in an Insecure World. Despite their promises to the contrary, Russia and China see cyber operations as a part of a warfare strategy during peacetime. Our response should be to cause diplomatic, financial, and legal pain, curtailing visas for guilty parties,

freezing their assets, and pursuing criminal actions against them. We should seek to weaken control over the Internet by regimes that engage in cyber crimes.

Confronting Internet Tyranny. Internet firewall circumvention and anti-censorship technology must become a national priority. A Republican administration will champion an open and free Internet based on principles of free expression and universal values and will pursue policies to empower citizens and U.S. companies operating in authoritarian countries to circumvent internet firewalls and gain accurate news and information online.