



INDIANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY

# 2018 INDIANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

**Building Stronger Hoosier Communities Together**

Fellow Democrats,

Hoosier Democrats are fighting for an Indiana where Hoosiers come first. Where leaders rise to meet challenges head-on. Where the focus is on building stronger communities and working families, fairness and our future, together. Our candidates, from township office to U.S. Senate, will fight for common sense initiatives to educate and train Hoosiers so they can thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy and earn a livable wage, provide for their family and retire with dignity. They will advocate for policies like paid leave and child care tax credits to lower the cost of living for working families and invest in quality of life initiatives.

We stand for freedom: the freedom to cast a ballot, freedom from the fear of a pre-existing condition bankrupting you or worse, freedom to live in a big city, small town, or anywhere between and have access to good-paying jobs and good schools, and the freedom to pursue your dreams free from discrimination. This is what progress looks like.

Our Party will provide the resources, know-how and grassroots training to help elect Hoosier Democrats at every level who demonstrate our values.

Our vision for Indiana is a state led by Hoosier Democrats where residents live in vibrant communities they are proud to call home. Where they earn the Midwest's highest wages, send their children to top-ranked schools, and live healthy, fulfilling lives.

Across our state, Hoosier Democratic candidates from the local level to Washington are already putting our principles to work, building stronger communities. They are finding new and innovative ways to train Hoosier workers and to grow good-paying jobs in their communities. They are putting more money back in the pockets of working Hoosiers by reducing the cost of living. And they are investing to create places where families want to live and where Hoosiers want to start businesses. From Hammond to Gary, South Bend, Winchester, Lafayette, Indianapolis, Sullivan, New Albany, and everywhere between, Hoosier Democrats are leading. At the Indiana Statehouse and in Congress, Hoosier Democrats fight for common sense policies that put the Hoosiers they represent first. It's our job to build on their work, and to elect more Democrats to offices at every level.

Livable wages. Early childhood and strong public education. Protecting access to affordable health care across the state. Safety, security and equality. Fairer elections. Democrats are fighting for these principles to build stronger communities.

Let's build on their progress. Let's get to work, and work together to do it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John C. Zuby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chair

1	AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR ALL HOOSIERS .....	- 8 -
2	• Work to raise incomes in our state, including incrementally increasing the minimum wage to	
3	\$15/hour to ensure no person working 40 hours a week lives in poverty while minimizing the impact	
4	to small businesses. ....	- 8 -
5	• Continue the fight for equal pay for equal work .....	- 8 -
6	• Institute a pay equity policy for public employees .....	- 8 -
7	• Make two years of community college or technical training tuition-free .....	- 8 -
8	• Look beyond renaming existing workforce development programs and target existing workforce	
9	training dollars to career-ready programs.....	- 8 -
10	• Focus high-wage, high-growth economic development efforts in rural areas and communities	
11	with high unemployment or that are underrepresented .....	- 8 -
12	• Expand broadband internet access to lower barriers for businesses, families and students ....	- 9 -
13	• Incentivize our state’s best and brightest to call Indiana home.....	- 9 -
14	• Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit .....	- 9 -
15	• Invest in manufacturing to help small businesses purchase equipment and hire new workers	- 9 -
16	• Support small businesses and startups in our state .....	- 9 -
17	• Incentivize employers to hire unemployed and underemployed Hoosiers.....	- 9 -
18	• Encourage an extensive evaluation of tax incentives .....	- 9 -
19	A FAIR DEAL FOR INDIANA WORKERS.....	- 9 -
20	• Support efforts such as Senator Joe Donnelly’s End Outsourcing Act.....	- 10 -
21	• Crack down on unfair practices that lead to a loss of Hoosier jobs.....	- 10 -
22	• Oppose unfair trade deals that ship American jobs overseas .....	- 10 -
23	• Support the passage and enforcement of state and federal laws ensuring workers the right to	
24	bargain .....	- 10 -
25	• Repeal “Right to Work” and restore the Common Construction Wage .....	- 10 -
26	• Encourage strong and swift penalties for violating labor laws.....	- 10 -
27	• Ensure that any new trade agreements include strong standards on labor .....	- 10 -
28	• Oppose any efforts that cancel labor agreements .....	- 10 -
29	• Work to restore workers’ rights to overtime, fight the repeal of dues deduction laws, work to	
30	restore and enhance prevailing wage protections, and stop companies from mislabeling employees ..	-
31	10 -	
32	• Empower the Indiana Civil Rights Commission to proactively fight pay discrimination .....	- 10 -

1	• Protect whistle-blowers reporting unsafe or unfair working condition .....	10 –
2	• Reform workers’ compensation to provide injured workers the resources they need to rejoin the	
3	workforce.....	10 –
4	• Ensure out-of-work Hoosiers have access to adequate unemployment insurance .....	10 –
5	• Secure fair and adequate funding for public schools .....	11 –
6	• End the practice of Hoosier taxpayer dollars funding private or for-profit schools.....	11 –
7	• Demand access to universal preschool across the state .....	11 –
8	• Abolish ISTEP .....	11 –
9	• Individualize high school graduation plans and expand access to college and career ready	
10	pathways.....	11 –
11	• Foster an environment of trust that embraces great teachers .....	11 –
12	• Engage families to increase the literacy rates of Hoosier children.....	11 –
13	• Ensure our schools continue to be safe .....	11 –
14	• Close the digital divide to ensure all students have equal access to technology .....	12 –
15	• End the practice of charging fees for public school textbooks and computers.....	12 –
16	• Ensure affordable and no-cost meals are available to public school students based on income ....	12 –
17		
18	• Promote the affordability of higher education for all Hoosiers .....	12 –
19	• Offer in-state tuition rates to DREAMers.....	12 –
20	<b>INVESTING IN HOOSIERS, REDUCING THE COST OF LIVING AND DEVELOPING A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY</b>	
21	<b>WORKFORCE .....</b>	<b>12 -</b>
22	• Re-invest in higher education at the state level .....	12 –
23	• Allow Hoosiers with student loan debt to refinance at the lowest rate possible .....	12 –
24	• Vigorously pursue federal grants for higher education/training programs .....	12 –
25	• Find ways to encourage start-up investment and remove barriers to capital .....	12 –
26	• Provide income-based tax credits to help offset the cost of child care .....	12 –
27	• Create a comprehensive paid family leave program .....	13 –
28	<b>SAFE AND STRONG COMMUNITIES .....</b>	
29	• Make it clear that Indiana does not condone acts of hate by passing a statewide hate crimes law–	
30		13 –
31	• Work with the Indiana General Assembly to ensure that local law enforcement agencies have the	
32	resources.....	13 –
33	• Attack Indiana’s opioid epidemic.....	13 –
34	• Expand on recent criminal code reforms.....	13 –

1	• Study policies requiring that bail be set using evidence-based risk assessments .....	13 –
2	• Provide grants for local law enforcement agencies to institute de-escalation and bias training. ...	13 –
3		
4	• Close the gun show and terrorist watch-list loophole and ensure every transaction involving the	
5	sale of a firearm includes a comprehensive background check. Strengthen child access prevention	
6	laws to ensure the safe storage of firearms. ....	13 –
7	• Take steps to reduce recidivism including expanding work release and education programs	13 –
8	• Streamline the criminal record expungement process.....	14 –
9	• Work with law enforcement agencies, health care groups and other stakeholders to legalize	
10	medical marijuana .....	14 –
11	• Protect survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, and stalking .....	14 –
12	<b>HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND LOWERING THE COST OF QUALITY CARE .....</b>	<b>14 -</b>
13	• Keep health care costs down by making premiums more affordable, reducing out-of-pocket	
14	expenses and capping prescription drug costs .....	14 –
15	• Fight attempts to cap or block critical funding for the Healthy Indiana Plan or HIP 2.0 .....	14 –
16	• Adequately fund outreach programs.....	14 –
17	• Block any Republican effort to privatize, “voucherize”, or phase out Medicare .....	14 –
18	• Expand access to mental health and addiction treatment .....	15 –
19	• Work with stakeholders and relevant state agencies to create opioid treatment benchmarks.	15 –
20	–	
21	• Invest in community health centers .....	15 –
22	• Incentivize health practitioners and doctors to work in rural and under-served areas.....	15 –
23	• Promote the health and safety of women and their families.....	15 –
24	• Work to stop harmful legislation that puts women and Hoosier families’ safety at risk .....	15 –
25	• Support efforts to reduce Indiana’s high infant mortality rate .....	15 –
26	• Fight against legislators forcing doctors to perform unnecessary medical procedures on patients.	
27	–	15 –
28	• Fight for legislation that promotes medically accurate information be given to patients.....	15 –
29	• Stand with Hoosier women against legislation that further erodes any rights that have been	
30	gained.....	15 –
31	<b>EQUALITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL: PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ALL HOOSIERS .....</b>	<b>15 -</b>
32	<b>ELECTION REFORM AND REDISTRICTING.....</b>	<b>17 -</b>
33	• Vehemently oppose any politically-motivated efforts aimed at disenfranchising any voter of our	
34	state .....	17 –
35	• Support expanded access to early voting through sufficient early voting sites .....	17 –

1	• Extend the hours polls are open .....	17 –
2	• Automatically register all eligible US citizens with an Indiana driver’s license .....	17 –
3	• Support the opportunity to vote by mail .....	17 –
4	• Support redistricting reform to maximize voter participation .....	17 –
5	• Advocate for reforms to campaign finance laws .....	17 –
6	<b>SECURING THE FUTURE OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE HOOSIERS.....</b>	<b>17 -</b>
7	• Fully-fund the Department of Child Services (DCS) so that the Department meets the 12/17	
8	caseload standards statewide.....	18 –
9	• Ensure family case managers are properly trained and compensated and develop a tuition	
10	forgiveness program .....	18 –
11	• Fully support adequate funding for substance abuse treatment and prevention services .....	19 –
12	<b>CONSERVING OUR LAND, PROMOTING ENERGY INDEPENDENCE .....</b>	<b>19 -</b>
13	• Modernize and retool our state's economy to replace the manufacturing jobs that have vanished	
14	from Indiana. We must utilize the skills of our workforce to attract “green” manufacturing .....	19 –
15	• Target investment to communities disproportionately impacted by offshoring or change the	
16	energy economy .....	19 –
17	• Identify and reduce Indiana's carbon footprint.....	19 –
18	• Protect our state forests from unnecessary lumber harvesting.....	19 –
19	• Promote energy efficiency programming across the state.....	19 –
20	• Promote an all-of-the-above energy strategy to decrease our dependence on foreign oil.....	20 –
21	• Support measures that will ensure and protect our supply of clean water .....	20 –
22	• Create environmental regulations that are ‘scale appropriate’ .....	20 –
23	• Promote programs that encourage waste reduction and recycling.....	20 –
24	• Increase investment in sustainable farming, fishing, forestry research and best practices.....	20 –
25	• Become a leader in farmland preservation, air quality improvement and economic growth ..	20 –
26	<b>A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE CROSSROADS OF AMERICA.....</b>	<b>20 -</b>
27	• Ensure Hoosier taxpayers receive a fair share of federal transportation funding by maximizing	
28	available funding.....	20 –
29	• Study alternative methods to fund future infrastructure needs.....	21 –
30	• Attach stiff penalties to private sector partners that fail to uphold their end of any infrastructure	
31	deals.....	21 –
32	• Achieve our long-term infrastructure investment goals with an eye on Indiana’s future,	
33	environmental sustainability, and the prosperity of our state.....	21 –
34	<b>HONORING OUR VETERANS.....</b>	<b>21 –</b>

1 • Gives veterans assistance in the job market.....– 21 –

2 • Incentivizes veterans to start new businesses and gives preference to veteran-owned businesses

3 for state contracts.....– 21 –

4 • Manages services for women veterans .....– 21 –

5 • Removes restrictive timeframes to give military families as much access to needed assistance as

6 possible .....– 21 –

7 • Continues to focus on the growing problem of PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and prevention of

8 military suicides. ....– 21 –

9 RESTORING TRUST AND BALANCE IN GOOD GOVERNMENT.....- 22 -

10

# 1 AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR ALL HOOSIERS

2

3 The facts don't lie. The Indiana economy is leaving Hoosiers behind. The cost of living keeps rising but  
4 Hoosiers' incomes haven't kept up.

5 Hoosier Democrats are committed to ensuring families do not just make ends meet, but thrive. The  
6 unemployment rate is not the ultimate barometer of a successful economy because not all jobs are  
7 created equal. Too many Hoosiers work more than one job just to put food on the table.

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8 An economy that works for Hoosiers grows good-paying jobs but also proactively  
9 provides opportunities for workers to retrain and retool to compete for 21st century  
10 jobs.

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11 An economy that works for all Hoosiers lowers the barriers for Hoosier entrepreneurs to take risks and  
12 start businesses right here.

13 Hoosier women earn just 75 cents for every dollar men make. For African American women: 64 cents,  
14 Hispanic women: 56 cents, and for Asian women: 77 cents.

15 Lost wages mean fewer resources to spend or save and make the rising cost of living even more difficult  
16 to navigate.

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17 Indiana's gender pay gap increased in 2016. It's unacceptable and it costs Hoosier  
18 women more than \$10 billion every year.

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19 To restore this vision for the Indiana economy, Hoosier Democrats will fight to:

- 20 • Work to raise incomes in our state, including incrementally increasing the minimum wage to  
21 \$15/hour to ensure no person working 40 hours a week lives in poverty while minimizing the impact  
22 to small businesses. Earning a sustainable, livable wage allows working families to provide for their  
23 families, save for retirement and get ahead.
- 24 • Continue the fight for equal pay for equal work, period.
- 25 • Institute a pay equity policy for public employees to ensure they are paid fairly, and highlight  
26 Indiana businesses that promote pay equity.
- 27 • Make two years of community college or technical training tuition-free for high-demand, high-wage  
28 positions aligned with local employers' needs.
- 29 • Look beyond renaming existing workforce development programs and target existing workforce  
30 training dollars to career-ready programs that teach the skills employers need now.
- 31 • Focus high-wage, high-growth economic development efforts in rural areas and communities with  
32 high unemployment or that are underrepresented in traditional economic development efforts.



- 1 • Expand broadband internet access to lower barriers for businesses, families and students in rural  
2 areas.
- 3 • Support education on women’s rights and work with our women’s organizations that support these  
4 efforts.
- 5 • Incentivize our state’s best and brightest to call Indiana home by creating tax incentives for those  
6 graduating with degrees in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).
- 7 • Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit and other savings vehicles for low income Hoosiers.
- 8 • Invest in manufacturing to help small businesses purchase equipment and hire new workers through  
9 initiatives such as Manufacturing Reinvestment Accounts.
- 10 • Promote economic innovation through sustained investment in research and development.
- 11 • Ensure Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals can continue to work and access educational  
12 opportunities in Indiana, while recognizing the \$500 million in economic activity DACA recipients  
13 generate for the Hoosier economy.
- 14 • Support small businesses and startups in our state – especially those engaged in technological  
15 innovations that help diversify the Hoosier economy.
- 16 • Incentivize employers to hire unemployed and underemployed Hoosiers.
- 17 • Encourage an extensive evaluation of tax incentives, as well as the establishment of rigorous job  
18 creation and accountability standards for economic development tools offered by the state. Claw  
19 back any incentives or taxpayer dollars used by companies to offshore Hoosier jobs, and continue to  
20 hold accountable those members of the General Assembly who vote against these claw backs.  
21

## 22 A FAIR DEAL FOR INDIANA WORKERS

23

24 Too often, incentives and tax breaks flow to corporations all too willing to chase profits by moving  
25 Hoosier jobs overseas. Communities in Indianapolis, Huntington and across the state know the  
26 economic uncertainty that comes with companies shipping jobs out of Indiana towns. We must put  
27 Hoosier workers before the corporations who do not look out for the best interests of Hoosier families  
28 in our state.

29 We also must recognize organized labor’s critical role in building Indiana’s middle class. Labor unions  
30 have fought for fair wages, good benefits and safer workplaces. As a result, every Hoosier worker enjoys  
31 the benefits organized labor fought so hard for and won.

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32 **Stronger labor unions strengthen the entire workforce. They are instrumental in**  
33 **raising wages for Hoosiers across the economy.**

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34 The right of workers to bargain collectively drives wages higher and fuels the growth of the middle class.  
35 “Right to Work” laws and other attempts to diminish Hoosier workers’ rights have led to stagnant

1 income growth. Restoring prevailing wages laws will help turn lagging wage growth around. It's time to  
2 end Republicans' war on working men, women and families.

3 The Indiana Democratic Party stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the efforts of our partners in organized  
4 labor to remain the foundation of the American marketplace. We'll fight to repeal efforts to  
5 purposefully undermine Hoosier workers' right to organize and demand fair wages and safe working  
6 conditions.

7 We will:

- 8 • Support efforts such as Senator Joe Donnelly's End Outsourcing Act that closes tax loopholes that  
9 encourage some corporations to ship American jobs overseas. It is unacceptable that our tax code  
10 awards incentives or taxpayer-funded contracts to companies that send Hoosier jobs to other  
11 countries.
- 12 • Crack down on unfair practices that lead to a loss of Hoosier jobs including currency manipulation  
13 and other tactics that put Indiana manufacturers on an unfair playing field.
- 14 • Oppose unfair trade deals that ship American jobs overseas. We need fair trade, not agreements  
15 that have the potential to put American companies at a disadvantage and Hoosiers out of work.
- 16 • Support the passage and enforcement of state and federal laws ensuring workers the right to  
17 bargain collectively, including those who work in the public sector and simplify the process for  
18 workers to organize unions.
- 19 • Repeal "Right to Work" and restore the Common Construction Wage to increase working Hoosiers'  
20 incomes and boost local economies.
- 21 • Encourage strong and swift penalties for violating labor laws, and support banning permanent  
22 replacements of workers who strike responsibly.
- 23 • Ensure that any new trade agreements include strong standards on labor, the environment, and  
24 currency manipulation.
- 25 • Oppose any efforts that cancel labor agreements or any measure that endangers workers on the  
26 job.
- 27 • Work to restore workers' rights to overtime, fight the repeal of dues deduction laws, work to restore  
28 and enhance prevailing wage protections, and stop companies from mislabeling employees as  
29 "independent contractors" to avoid paying benefits and taxes.
- 30 • Empower the Indiana Civil Rights Commission to proactively fight pay discrimination at every level  
31 and ensure once and for all, equal pay for equal work.
- 32 • Protect whistle-blowers reporting unsafe or unfair working conditions.
- 33 • Reform workers' compensation to provide injured workers the resources they need to rejoin the  
34 workforce.
- 35 • Ensure out-of-work Hoosiers have access to adequate unemployment insurance to help them return  
36 to the workplace.
- 37 • Enforce "Buy American" provisions and ensure no waivers to Buy American procurement  
38 procedures.

39  
40

# 1 A WORLD-CLASS PUBLIC EDUCATION

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3 Indiana’s Constitution guarantees a quality public education for every Hoosier child.

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4 Public schools anchor Indiana communities. Public schools are the spark that ignite  
5 the curiosity of Hoosier children and are their ticket to a promising future.

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6 Public schools are the center of urban and rural communities, alike. And Republicans have put their  
7 promise in jeopardy.

8 It’s time to focus on what’s best for student learning again. Indiana is mired in a teacher shortage crisis.  
9 For too long, political considerations have outweighed what is best for students. It starts with respecting  
10 teachers, educational best practices, and returning the emphasis to the classroom. Average teacher pay  
11 in Indiana dropped by 15 percent between 2000 and 2017, the largest drop in the nation.

12 We will work to:

- 13 • Secure fair and adequate funding for public schools to ensure access to a balanced curriculum for all  
14 students and ensure access to highly effective teachers regardless of their ZIP code.
- 15 • End the practice of Hoosier taxpayer dollars funding private or for-profit schools.
- 16 • Invest in educators by boosting pay and ensuring classrooms across the state are equipped with the  
17 resources – both material and staff – to provide a top quality learning environment.
- 18 • Promote a positive learning climate for all students. End bullying so all students feel included  
19 regardless of their race, color, religion, creed, national origin, economic status, disability, sex, sexual  
20 orientation, or gender identity.
- 21 • Demand access to universal preschool across the state, including the expansion of preschool  
22 programs in all public school corporations by 2020.
- 23 • Abolish ISTEP and all other high-stakes tests.
  - 24 • Make streamlined, individualized assessments that provide quick feedback to students,  
25 families, and educators, that show performance and growth over the course of a school year  
26 optional.
- 27 • Individualize high school graduation plans and expand access to college and career ready pathways.  
28 Ensure all students have a clear pathway to graduation that supports their ability to enter college or  
29 begin their career.
- 30 • Foster an environment of trust that embraces great teachers and encourages the best and brightest  
31 to enter the teaching profession.
- 32 • Engage families to increase the literacy rates of Hoosier children by embracing tried-and-true best  
33 practices.
- 34 • Ensure our schools continue to be safe for all Hoosier children by providing the resources and  
35 flexibility for local administrators to develop security solutions that work in their communities.

- 1 • Close the digital divide to ensure all students have equal access to technology and resources at
- 2 school and at home through expanding broadband internet access, especially in rural areas.
- 3 • End the practice of charging fees for public school textbooks and computers.
- 4 • Ensure affordable and no-cost meals are available to public school students based on income and
- 5 end the practice of meal debt-shaming.
- 6 • Promote the affordability of higher education for all Hoosiers by ensuring that tuition, textbooks,
- 7 and other material costs remain as low as possible.
- 8 • Expand the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholars* program.
- 9 • Offer in-state tuition rates to DREAMers who received DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)
- 10 status from the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service.
- 11 • Promote prevention and education programs that teach age-appropriate sex education. These
- 12 programs should focus on medically-accurate information for Hoosiers to protect themselves and
- 13 others.
- 14

## 15 INVESTING IN HOOSIERS, REDUCING THE COST OF LIVING AND DEVELOPING A 21<sup>st</sup>

## 16 CENTURY WORKFORCE

17

18 Our state’s most valuable resource has always been Hoosiers. Time and again, Hoosiers have proved,

19 with the right tools, our work ethic, ingenuity, and creativity is second to none. To compete in the 21st

20 century economy, we must invest in Hoosiers and build strong communities.

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21 *Hoosier businesses count on a talented workforce but Indiana ranks 45<sup>th</sup> in labor*

22 *supply. No matter how low taxes are, businesses won’t relocate or expand if they lack*

23 *a supply of workers with the right skills.*

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24 We need comprehensive approaches that:

- 25 • Re-invest in higher education at the state level while encouraging colleges to keep costs in check.
- 26 Hoosier Democrats believe students can go to college or receive training that best meets their
- 27 career goals without being saddled with student loan debt for years to come.
- 28 • Allow Hoosiers with student loan debt to refinance at the lowest rate possible and simplify and
- 29 expand income-based repayment options.
- 30 • Vigorously pursue federal grants for higher education/training programs in high-demand, high-wage
- 31 jobs.
- 32 • Find ways to encourage start-up investment and remove barriers to capital for Hoosier
- 33 entrepreneurs.
- 34 • Provide income-based tax credits to help offset the cost of child care and reduce Hoosiers’ cost of
- 35 living.

- 1 • Create a comprehensive paid family leave program that allows new parents – both mothers and  
2 fathers – to spend time with their newborn or newly adopted child and for family members to care  
3 for an aging or sick loved one without the fear of losing a paycheck or failing to cover bills.  
4

5

## 6 SAFE AND STRONG COMMUNITIES

7 Public safety is vital to thriving communities and providing our children the future they deserve, and it  
8 takes an all-hands-on-deck approach. Building safe and strong communities means examining past  
9 practices and ensuring every stakeholder has a seat at the table. For too long, Indiana has failed to look  
10 inward and evaluate our efforts. It's time to move Indiana forward. Currently, under-supported,  
11 overstretched law enforcement agencies both at the state and local level are struggling to meet the  
12 challenges faced by violent crime and an epidemic of drug addiction that is tearing at the fabric of too  
13 many Hoosier communities.

14

15 We firmly oppose the practice of racial profiling as a law enforcement tool. Police stops or arrests should  
16 be based on evidence of criminal conduct, not on a person's demographic or physical characteristics.  
17 More work must be done to correct systemic racism including the disproportionately high arrest of  
18 people of color and fair housing, health, environment, and safety standards. For too long, these issues  
19 have been addressed at the margins and must be confronted head-on.

20

21

22 We will:

- 23 • Make it clear that Indiana does not condone acts of hate by passing a statewide hate crimes law.  
24 Indiana is one of only five states currently without one.
- 25 • Work with the Indiana General Assembly to ensure that local law enforcement agencies have the  
26 resources and tools available to them to keep Hoosiers safe.
- 27 • Attack Indiana's opioid epidemic by mustering state and local agencies to track, investigate and  
28 prosecute pill mills and dealers, and prevent and treat addiction.
- 29 • Expand on recent criminal code reforms to explore ways in which penalties can be more fairly  
30 assessed.
- 31 • Study policies requiring that bail be set using evidence-based risk assessments to ensure low-  
32 income, low-risk offenders don't remain in jail simply because they can't afford bail.
- 33 • Provide grants for local law enforcement agencies to institute de-escalation and bias training.
- 34 • Close the gun show and terrorist watch-list loophole and ensure every transaction involving the sale  
35 of a firearm includes a comprehensive background check. Strengthen child access prevention laws to  
36 ensure the safe storage of firearms.
- 37 • Take steps to reduce recidivism including expanding work release and education programs to help  
38 ex-offenders find jobs and reintegrate into society.

- 1 • Streamline the criminal record expungement process and make expungement assistance available at  
2 Department of Workforce Development WorkOne locations.
- 3 • Work with law enforcement agencies, health care groups and other stakeholders to legalize medical  
4 marijuana and decriminalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana.
- 5 • Indiana Democrats believe that Hoosiers should have the right to vote on the regulation and  
6 taxation of marijuana.
- 7 • Protect survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, and stalking through legislation.

## 10 HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND LOWERING THE COST OF QUALITY CARE

11  
12 The United States is the richest country on earth, yet we rank near last among industrialized countries in  
13 health care coverage.

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14 *As Democrats, we believe health care is a right, not a privilege. The Affordable Care*  
15 *Act was an enormous step forward. More Americans than ever before now have the*  
16 *peace of mind and security that comes with knowing your family is covered.*

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17 Pre-existing conditions no longer mean a lifetime of medical debt, a loss of coverage, or worse.

18 But there’s much more to be done. We must curb the rising cost of premiums and prescription drugs,  
19 preserve Medicare and fight any efforts to move backward on access to affordable health care. The  
20 Affordable Care Act isn’t perfect and it’s up to Democrats to work together to make universal health  
21 coverage a reality for Americans.

22 We must also stem the rising tide of opioid addiction in our communities. Indiana’s opioid overdose  
23 death rate has quadrupled since 1999. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates  
24 there are 109 opioid prescriptions for every 100 Hoosiers. And Indiana lags neighboring states in access  
25 to treatment. We must take proactive steps to end this scourge.

26 We must:

- 27 • Keep health care costs down by making premiums more affordable, reducing out-of-pocket  
28 expenses and capping prescription drug costs while maintaining protections for those with pre-  
29 existing conditions and prohibitions on lifetime coverage caps.
- 30 • Fight attempts to cap or block critical funding for the Healthy Indiana Plan or HIP 2.0.
- 31 • Adequately fund outreach programs to ensure Hoosiers know which health care options are  
32 available to them.
- 33 • Block any Republican effort to privatize, “voucherize”, or phase out Medicare.

- 1 • Expand access to mental health and addiction treatment by preserving and expanding care  
2 options through HIP 2.0 and the Affordable Care Act. This includes supporting efforts such as  
3 Senator Joe Donnelly's legislation to address the shortage workers in the addiction treatment  
4 field.
- 5 • Develop a HIP 2.0 buy-in option for Hoosiers earning more than the allowable limits so they can  
6 retain health care coverage. This program allows working people to earn more income without  
7 the risk of losing vital health care coverage.
- 8 • Work with stakeholders and relevant state agencies to create opioid treatment benchmarks to  
9 determine progress and success for those participating in treatment so the state can direct  
10 resources to the most successful options.
- 11 • Invest in community health centers, especially in traditionally under-served and rural areas.
- 12 • Incentivize health practitioners and doctors to work in rural and under-served areas through  
13 tuition forgiveness and other methods.
- 14 • Promote the health and safety of women and their families, including access to vital health  
15 services and care to obtain preventive and family planning services including all forms of birth  
16 control.
- 17 • Work to stop harmful legislation that puts women and Hoosier families' safety at risk by putting  
18 lawmakers between women and their doctors and endangering the doctor-patient relationship.
- 19 • Support efforts to reduce Indiana's high infant mortality rate, including the fight to ensure  
20 access to affordable and ongoing medical and pre-natal care.
- 21 • Fight against legislators forcing doctors to perform unnecessary medical procedures on patients.
- 22 • Fight for legislation that promotes medically accurate information be given to patients.
- 23 • Stand with Hoosier women against legislation that further erodes any rights that have been  
24 gained and continue efforts for more protection under the law towards equality and  
25 preservation of their healthcare choices.
- 26

## 27 EQUALITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL: PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF ALL HOOSIERS

28

29 The Indiana Democratic Party is proud of our longstanding commitment to and support for civil rights  
30 and equality. We support making the promise of "equal protection under the law" a reality for all.

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31 *As the Party of inclusion, we strongly oppose the restriction of opportunities to*  
32 *Hoosiers based on race, religion, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity,*  
33 *veteran status, economic background, or as a person with a disability.*

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34 A key step forward is electing more public officials that reflect the communities they represent. Hoosier  
35 Democrats are committed to providing the resources, training, and tools to those candidates.

1 We reaffirm our commitment to fully embrace Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended,  
2 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, as well as full  
3 enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 for Hoosiers with disabilities and the Age  
4 Discrimination in Employment Act.

5 As Democrats, we believe that older workers are a vital part of the workforce and that prohibitions  
6 against age discrimination should be enforceable in the same manner and to the same extent as any  
7 other discrimination. We also continue to support legislation that would protect the freedom of all  
8 Hoosiers and create tougher penalties for those who infringe, criminally or otherwise, on those  
9 freedoms.

10 We are concerned with accessibility issues for those with disabilities, including personal income limits  
11 and attaining and sustaining personal care when needed. We also believe that a state Family and  
12 Medical Leave Act should be ratified and that meaningful remedies be available when a person is  
13 subjected to discrimination and seeks redress under our state’s civil rights statute. Further, Hoosiers  
14 should not be bound by their disabilities – therefore, Democrats will advocate for a better environment  
15 for entrepreneurship and small business opportunities for Hoosiers with disabilities.

16 We believe those who wish to make a life for themselves and their families in Indiana should be  
17 afforded the opportunity to do so. Furthermore, it is unconscionable for any human being to be  
18 exploited or abused. Every Hoosier deserves to be treated with basic human decency and should be  
19 allowed to pursue the American dream.

20 We believe that state and local governments, as well as the private sector, should create a truly diverse  
21 and inclusive economic infrastructure by making it a priority to buy goods and services from minority  
22 contractors.

23 Republican leaders at the Statehouse have invested too much time and taxpayer resources focused on  
24 divisive social issues that send an unwelcoming message to those around us.

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25 This is simple. As Democrats, we believe in full rights and protections for all people in  
26 our country, regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or ability.  
27 These are our neighbors and any effort to reduce or restrict their rights and  
28 protections will ultimately hobble the Hoosier economy and send a signal that  
29 Indiana is an unwelcoming state.

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30 The Indiana Democratic Party opposes all forms of discrimination based upon sexual orientation or  
31 gender identity and all efforts to enshrine discrimination in our state’s Constitution. As Democrats, we  
32 oppose discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodation and we strongly support the  
33 adoption of a statewide policy barring discrimination against LGBTQ+ Hoosiers.



1 Democrats are working to ensure that every Hoosier gets a fair shot to achieve the American dream. For  
2 the sake of current and future generations, we feel it is our duty to put an end to any injustices that  
3 threaten that goal. In the Indiana Democratic Party, everyone has, and always will have a voice.

#### 4 **ELECTION REFORM AND REDISTRICTING**

5

6 To restore trust in government, the Indiana Democratic Party supports the right of every eligible Hoosier  
7 citizen to register to vote and cast a ballot without undue burden, fear, or intimidation.

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8 **Voting is our most fundamental right as citizens, one that preserves all other rights**  
9 **and ensures the legitimacy of our political system.**

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10

11 As Hoosier Democrats, we:

- 12 • Vehemently oppose any politically-motivated efforts aimed at disenfranchising any voter of our  
13 state, including efforts to make it difficult for voters to obtain identification or restricting access  
14 to polling locations.
- 15 • Support expanded access to early voting through sufficient early voting sites across the state.
- 16 • Extend the hours polls are open to 6am to 9pm on Election Day. Indiana has some of the  
17 shortest Election Day voting hours in the nation.
- 18 • Automatically register all eligible US citizens with an Indiana driver’s license unless they choose  
19 to opt out.
- 20 • Support the opportunity to vote by mail for all Hoosier voters without requiring an excuse to do  
21 so.
- 22 • Support redistricting reform to maximize voter participation and end the practice of  
23 gerrymandering, where politicians choose their voters, instead of the other way around.
  - 24 ○ The Indiana General Assembly must immediately create an independent redistricting  
25 commission that will draw maps based on legitimate legal factors and exclude political  
26 considerations.
- 27 • Advocate for reforms to campaign finance laws that disrupt the ability for all Hoosiers to  
28 participate in the political process and allow undue influence from outside interests and those  
29 with the deepest pockets. It’s time for dramatic changes in campaign finance laws to eliminate  
30 the extraordinary influence exercised by special interests and the wealthy.

#### 31 **SECURING THE FUTURE OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE HOOSIERS**

32

1 Every Hoosier deserves a fair shot at success, economic security and to earn a good living. The Indiana  
2 Democratic Party has a long and proud tradition of championing policies that provide Hoosiers with a  
3 launching pad to achieve their full potential.

4 We know that children live better lives when their families are strong.

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5 We know that families are stronger when they reside in communities that connect  
6 them to economic opportunities, social networks and services. These connections  
7 include employment, health care, education, adequate nutrition, housing,  
8 technology, culture and safe child care.

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9 We are committed to enabling the economic stability of all Indiana families by minimizing barriers to  
10 employment. Transportation, childcare, education, discrimination, and eldercare are all potential  
11 obstacles that can prevent individuals from reaching their full potential in the workforce. The Indiana  
12 Democratic Party supports policies that will assist Hoosier workers with these issues and provide  
13 opportunities to earn success.

- 14 • Fully-fund the Department of Child Services (DCS) so that the Department meets the 12/17  
15 caseload standards statewide and any necessary investments are made judiciously.
- 16 • Ensure family case managers are properly trained and compensated and develop a tuition  
17 forgiveness program for college graduates who work for DCS.

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18 Indiana had 29,315 children in foster care during fiscal year 2016, according to  
19 federal data from the Administration for Children and Families. During that same  
20 time period, there were 23,646 children in care in Ohio; 19,998 in Illinois; 18,194 in  
21 Michigan and 13,016 in Kentucky. Illinois has twice the population but half as many  
22 abused and neglected children in its system.

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23

24 We have a moral obligation to take care of our nation's seniors, and after a lifetime of paying into these  
25 programs, we have a responsibility to ensure that both Medicare and Social Security are preserved for  
26 current and future retirees. We must ensure the state programs designed to help protect and support  
27 our Hoosier seniors are adequately funded.

28 The Indiana Democratic Party believes that vulnerable Hoosiers, including senior citizens and low-  
29 income families, must not be the victims of those who would take advantage of them through risky  
30 mortgages, loans, or identity and investment schemes. Hoosier families must be free from the fear of  
31 losing money to predatory lenders or dubious commercial enterprises. We should also recognize the  
32 importance of consumer protections by supporting efforts to bolster cyber security and fraud reduction.

1 As the Party that advocates for all Hoosiers, we:

- 2 • Fully support adequate funding for substance abuse treatment and prevention services,  
3 including programs for prenatal substance abuse prevention. Indiana must adequately address  
4 the needs of people with HIV/AIDS, while at the same time provide access to education and  
5 prevention services to reduce the number of new infections following the previous  
6 administration’s trepidation in response to the outbreak in Southern Indiana.
- 7 • Fight food insecurity and make clear we are committed to a guarantee that no Hoosier should  
8 go hungry.

## 10 CONSERVING OUR LAND, PROMOTING ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

11  
12 The Indiana Democratic Party believes in a strong, balanced approach to energy production and  
13 environmental stewardship and is keenly aware that our state’s economy depends on healthy land. We  
14 believe a responsible and comprehensive energy policy should promote domestic production and  
15 national security, while providing affordable, clean energy to Hoosier families and businesses.

16 Hoosiers have a tremendous opportunity to contribute to the evolving energy economy. The production  
17 of renewable and alternative energy sources could create jobs and compete with conventional sources  
18 of power to drive down the cost of power, spur innovation, and preserve our land.

19 We also recognize Hoosier communities and our economy are built on the foundation of our natural  
20 resources—from Lake Michigan and the Hoosier National Forest to our rivers and streams and fertile  
21 farmland.

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22 As Hoosiers continue to innovate, we should acknowledge that our land, the air we  
23 breathe and the water we drink are critical elements of the Hoosier economy and  
24 must be maintained and protected.

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25 The Indiana Democratic Party believes that we must:

- 26 • Modernize and retool our state's economy to replace the manufacturing jobs that have vanished  
27 from Indiana. We must utilize the skills of our workforce to attract “green” manufacturing and invest  
28 in renewable energies, both of which will sustain the environment and provide high-skilled, high-  
29 paying jobs.
- 30 • Target investment to communities disproportionately impacted by offshoring or change the energy  
31 economy to retrain workers.
- 32 • Identify and reduce Indiana's carbon footprint.
- 33 • Protect our state forests from unnecessary lumber harvesting and regularly audit our state’s natural  
34 resources for long-term environmental sustainability.
- 35 • Promote energy efficiency programming across the state by restoring programs such as the Energize  
36 Indiana program.

- 1 • Promote an all-of-the-above energy strategy to decrease our dependence on foreign oil, which  
2 poses a serious threat to our economy and our national security. Fluctuating gas prices create  
3 economic insecurity and force Hoosier families to make difficult sacrifices.
- 4 • Support measures that will ensure and protect our supply of clean water and encourage  
5 comprehensive water consumption and ground water protection plans.
- 6 • Create environmental regulations that are ‘scale appropriate’, (i.e. less burdensome on small to mid-  
7 sized farms, businesses and manufacturers).
- 8 • Promote programs that encourage waste reduction and recycling.
- 9 • Increase investment in sustainable farming, fishing, forestry research and best practices.
- 10 • Become a leader in farmland preservation, air quality improvement and economic growth.

11

## 12 A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE CROSSROADS OF AMERICA

13

14 Indiana’s infrastructure is crumbling. From outdated bridges to dial-up internet, Indiana lacks a true  
15 foundation for faster and more efficient modes of transport, and local communities struggle to maintain  
16 what they have - let alone the capacity to improve or expand.

17

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Indiana’s location, at the “Crossroads of America,” is a strategic advantage that  
Republicans are forfeiting through underinvestment and wasteful spending.

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18

19 Strong communities and a growing economy depend on a comprehensive approach to infrastructure.  
20 Not just roads and bridges, but railways, ports, airports, transit, waterways and internet access.

21 The Indiana Democratic Party strongly backs making significant and strategic investments in Indiana’s  
22 infrastructure through the targeted use of federal and state dollars. Construction of highways and  
23 bridges must be adequately financed with a combination of resources to ensure that everyone pays a  
24 fair share of the burden. We support developing and expanding public mass transit initiatives to reduce  
25 congestion and pollution, especially for high-density population centers with disproportionately low-  
26 income residents. Better transit options mean better access to good-paying jobs. Infrastructure  
27 investment is as critical to the Indiana economy as it is to Hoosier communities. In addition, we must:

- 28 • Develop a comprehensive approach that targets dollars to projects where investment leverages  
29 future growth, like expanded broadband internet access in rural communities or investment in  
30 water and wastewater infrastructure, where some communities still rely on wooden pipes.
- 31 • Ensure Hoosier taxpayers receive a fair share of federal transportation funding by maximizing  
32 available funding. Indiana currently receives 91% of its share of Highway Trust Fund contributions.  
33 We need to increase the rate of return on our tax dollars by leveraging federal funds so the State of  
34 Indiana and local governments have the infrastructure to support and attract businesses to Indiana.

- 1 • Study alternative methods to fund future infrastructure needs and move away from regressive  
2 funding mechanisms that place a higher burden on low-income and working Hoosiers.
- 3 • Attach stiff penalties to private sector partners that fail to uphold their end of any infrastructure  
4 deals or do not meet an agreed-upon timetable.
- 5 • Achieve our long-term infrastructure investment goals with an eye on Indiana’s future,  
6 environmental sustainability, and the prosperity of our state for generations to come.

7

## 8 HONORING OUR VETERANS

9

10 The Indiana Democratic Party honors those who serve in the United States Armed Forces, as well as the  
11 Indiana National Guard and Air National Guard. The dedication of an individual in this endeavor is the  
12 ultimate selfless act on behalf of one’s state and country.

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13 We continue to applaud the sacrifices of these individuals and their families to serve  
14 our nation and to defend and protect the principles of democracy.

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15 It is our steadfast belief that we must continue to be committed to giving our brave men and women the  
16 tools to succeed in whatever endeavor our nation faces either at home or abroad. We must help bridge  
17 the gap between military families and benefits they’ve rightfully earned.

18 Our party is committed to providing our aging and newly-returned veterans the benefits they have  
19 earned. Our duty to those who serve our nation does not end when they leave that service: we must  
20 guarantee that our veterans have access to the health benefits, education, and job opportunities we  
21 promised them.

22 This includes championing legislation that:

- 23 • Gives veterans assistance in the job market and makes it easier for businesses to hire those who  
24 serve our country.
- 25 • Incentivizes veterans to start new businesses and gives preference to veteran-owned businesses for  
26 state contracts.
- 27 • Manages services for women veterans and military families.
- 28 • Removes restrictive timeframes to give military families as much access to needed assistance as  
29 possible.
- 30 • Continues to focus on the growing problem of PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, and prevention of  
31 military suicides. It is imperative that we respect, care, and prepare for new sets of challenges met  
32 by our veterans so that they may come home to Indiana and be successful. One way that we can  
33 accomplish this is supporting the successful implementation of Senator Joe Donnelly's "Care  
34 Package," which addresses mental health care for our veterans.

35

1 RESTORING TRUST AND BALANCE IN GOOD GOVERNMENT

2

3 In today’s hyper-political environment, the premise behind “good government” can easily get lost. Trust  
4 in government is dangerously low and leaders at the highest levels of government are more interested  
5 in creating problems than solving them.

6 The Indiana Democratic Party is working to restore trust in good government by sharing an aggressive,  
7 results-based vision for how Indiana government can do much, much better.

8 Through our principles of fiscal responsibility, common sense, and inclusion, we can renew our focus on  
9 building opportunities for working Hoosiers- rather than on an ideology that plays to the politics of  
10 division and fear.

11 Hoosiers deserve leadership that will consider the full impact of fiscal decisions instead of elected  
12 officials who chase headlines to score cheap political points.

13 The Indiana Democratic Party believes ethical governance is rooted in honesty, accountability, and  
14 transparency. We believe that high ethical standards must be restored and put in place at every level in  
15 state government. Values based upon the highest principles must be commonplace in the Governor’s  
16 Office, the General Assembly and all state agencies and elected offices.

17 Government ethics should be applied and enforced with an objective standard, and investigations  
18 should be conducted independently, thoroughly, and publicly to make certain that violators are handled  
19 accordingly and all questions raised are answered.

20