

## **2016-17 Action Agenda**

### **Agriculture**

Support sustainable farming: with education, promotion of local sourcing of food, incentives for urban agriculture and community farms, and the elimination of subsidies for corporate farms.

Support agricultural research, economic incentives and policies for methods that contribute to soil health and carbon sequestration.

Support and promote small family farmers involved in local and sustainable community food production. Eliminate industrial farm subsidies that currently disproportionately reward large-scale industrial farms.

### **Business and Community Development**

Support equal access to the internet for people and businesses, and universal access to broadband throughout Minnesota.

Support passage of a 21<sup>st</sup> century Glass-Steagall act to reinstate and modernize core banking protections by separating traditional banks from riskier financial institutions that offer services such as investment banking, swaps dealing, and private equity services.

Support policies and increased resources to prevent homelessness, promote stable housing, and expand economic opportunity.

Support a Paid Family Leave Act that would provide full or partial wage replacement during leave for birth, adoption, or care of seriously ill family members.

### **Civil, Human & Constitutional Rights**

Support the Compassionate Care Act, which authorizes aid in dying for terminally ill, mentally competent adults to ask for and receive a prescription for medication they can self-administer for a peaceful death if/when their suffering becomes unbearable.

Support restoring voting rights to Minnesotans convicted of a felony when they are on probation or parole.

Support legislation to overturn the Supreme Court ruling in Citizen United, via a constitutional amendment affirming that Corporations are not People and Money is not Speech

Support steps to reduce incarceration and its negative impacts: through juvenile justice reform and adult sentencing reform, including reducing the severity of drug sentences, eliminating mandatory minimum sentences and reforming probation and supervised release policies.

Support legislation to legalize marijuana for both medical and recreational purposes.

Support comprehensive immigration reform offering a clear path to citizenship.

Support measures such as: early voting, automatic voter registration, and restoration of the Voting Rights Act of 1964; and opposes requirements which prevent equal accessibility to all sectors of the voting population.

Support the creation and recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day, on the second Monday in October, encouraging government entities, organizations, and other public and private institutions to change their policies and practices to reflect the experiences of American Indian people and our country's indigenous roots, culture, history, and significant contributions in order to close persistent and pervasive disparities.

We oppose discrimination against any person on the basis of economic means.

### **Consumer Issues**

Support regulating the use of pesticides from the neonicotinoid family to protect bees and other pollinators, which are necessary for the production of a significant fraction of the food we eat.

Support legislation to label all food for the purpose of identifying all genetically modified (GMO) food products and/or ingredients.

Support requiring all nurseries and business selling plants, to let the public know whether or not the plant has been treated in any way with systemic pesticide from the neonicotinoid family.

Support reforms to Payday Lending laws and regulations, with stronger underwriting standards, caps on interest rates and consecutive loans, limits on loan durations, and bans on mandatory arbitration clauses.

Support net neutrality and equal access to the internet with no preferences given to those who can pay more.

Support the creation of protected, pesticide free pollinator habitat, especially in strategic areas such as in roadsides and in stream buffers, with ample, pesticide free plants that bloom successively from spring to fall.

Support labeling foods with their country of origin.

## **EDUCATION**

Support sufficient state funding for Minnesota's public colleges, universities and trade schools so they can hold the line on tuition while investing in instructors so they can educate our next generation.

Support proposals to increase access to quality early childhood programs taught by licensed professionals by providing more early childhood and family education programs and universal, school-based preschool for all children.

Support increased funding for wraparound k-12 social services by adding school support staff, such as school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses to ensure that children's needs are met, especially schools with higher needs populations.

Support a reduction in the burden of standardized testing through the use of fewer, better tests and contracts with testing vendors that hold them accountable to the students and the public.

Support the changing of school's financing to create a more equitable school funding process.

Support a healthy and respectful learning environment that is free of bullying, harassment and violence.

Support comprehensive sexual health education that equips students with the knowledge necessary to make the best choices about their sexual health, and reduce rates of unplanned pregnancy and sexual transmitted infections.

Support legislation (such as tax credits, loan forgiveness programs, and refinancing) to reduce Minnesota's student loan debt.

## **Energy**

Support a transition to renewable energy where everyone has affordable access to the benefits of clean energy.

Support legislation to aggressively reduce carbon emissions by putting a steadily rising, revenue-neutral fee on carbon that returns all revenue to households in monthly dividends.

Support the EPA's clean power plan for replacement of coal by renewable energy sources for 50% of electricity by 2030 and 100% by 2050.

Oppose all subsidies, tax breaks, and other financial support for fossil fuels.

Support legislation that requires all crude oil pipelines transiting Minnesota to have Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), to have the financial assurances for spill and abandonment cleanup, and respect sovereign native territory.

### **Government Accountability to the Public**

Support the prohibition of for-profit incarceration businesses from operating or leasing facilities in the state of Minnesota and the prohibition of housing Minnesota inmates in any for-profit incarceration program.

Support language on a "single subject rule" requiring that no bill before either the House or Senate shall embrace more than one subject, other than major finance bills.

Support changing the campaign finance laws in order to eliminate money influence in politics and restore democracy to the people.

Support reform to more accurately represent the population when drawing legislative districts, to dismantle the practice of gerrymandering.

Support all actions necessary to require the disclosure of all political contributions and expenditures, including electioneering communications, (but excluding any organizations internal communications with its membership), in order to eliminate "dark money" from Minnesota elections.

We oppose corporations having rights to influence political campaigns and elections.

### **Health and Human Services**

Support funding for universal pre-kindergarten and opportunities for affordable daycare.

Support negotiation by public agencies for the cost of prescription drugs.

Support State and National mental health initiatives to increase access to mental health and wellness for all people.

Support women's health issues, which include continuing to fund Planned Parenthood, care for rape victims and education for all on what constitutes sexual abuse.

Support legislation that would require a minimum standard of Registered Nurse to Patient ratios to protect patient safety.

Oppose the privatizing of Medicare and Medicaid and return the programs to their original and efficient method of direct payment to doctors and hospitals.

Support health care as a basic right for everyone in our society, and take steps to ensure that everyone is able to receive a minimum level of health care including physical, mental and dental care.

### **Labor and Employment**

Oppose "Right to work" legislation and or any amendments to the Minnesota constitution, which are unnecessary, unsafe and unfair.

Supports a minimum wage increase to \$15 an hour and include annual cost of living adjustments.

Support legislation to guarantee that all working Minnesotans have access to earned sick and safe time benefits that are fully paid and enforceable.

Oppose all attempts by the Minnesota legislature to eliminate or reduce prevailing wage rates in the state of Minnesota.

Support public service workers right to join a union.

### **National Security and International Policy**

Oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement.

We support prioritizing diplomacy in all National and International affairs.

### **Natural Resources and the Environment**

Support legislation to stop the release of greenhouse gases to limit climate change and the acidification of our oceans as we recognize the threat to our environment.

Support policies that make water quality and drinking water quality a priority by investing in infrastructure to protect and monitor drinking water sources and delivery systems and addressing aging water infrastructure, nitrate runoff and salt pollution from our roads.

Support funding and legislation to impose new regulatory mandates and incentive based measures to improve monitoring and assessment, restoration, and protection of Minnesota's surface waters.

Support legislation that will restore the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Citizen Board to its full capacity and authority.

Support the Great Lakes Compact and oppose new or increased withdrawals or diversion from the Great Lakes.

Oppose fracking and frac sand mining because of their damage to the environment and the resulting burden on future generations.

### **Public Safety and Crime Prevention**

Support requiring a background check before the purchase of any firearm at a gun show, through the Internet, or between unrelated individuals.

Support banning the sale of semi-automatic weapons designed to use high-powered ammunition and high-capacity magazines

Support a ban on private, for-profit prisons and detention centers in Minnesota.

Support firearm safety, awareness and education.

Support law enforcement be trained to de-escalate to avoid physical violence, particularly when dealing with the mentally ill or individuals from different cultures or races.

### **Retirement Security**

Support the removal of the cap (Scrap the Cap) on income subject to Social Security tax.

Support Social Security benefit increases for cost of living (COLA) tied to increases in the Consumer Price Index – Elderly (CPIE).

Support fully funding Social Security.

Oppose the privatization of the Social Security fund.

Support fully funding the Medicare Trust Fund.

### **Tax and Budget Policy**

Support legislation to curtail the practice of “inversion”, where a company moves overseas to shield themselves against paying taxes.

Support the continued development of a progressive tax system that is based on the ability to pay.

### **Transportation**

Support the passage of legislation to adequately fund the upgrading of all of its aging infrastructures: transportation, drinking water, and sewage treatment – in ways that are also more “green” and sustainable.

Supports investment in a balanced, multi-modal transportation system that is racially just, economically competitive, healthy, safe and accessible to users of all ages and abilities.

Support efforts to improve rail safety to protect Minnesota’s communities, assets and environment. Also, ensure compliance with and enforcement of current local, state and federal laws, rules and regulations to minimize risks regarding transport of hazardous materials by rail.

### **Veteran’s Affairs**

Support funding for state and local veterans’ programs, including transition assistance, job training, and housing assistance.

Support increased funding and staffing for VA Medical Centers to ensure veterans have prompt access to physical and mental health.