Platform of the Montana Democratic Party
Adopted June 21st, 2026

Preamble

The Montana Democratic Party is the party of the people. We welcome to our cause Montanans of every color, creed, and condition. Our history as a party teaches us that by working together and speaking as one, we can move society forward, especially when we raise our voices for those among us with little money, influence, or acceptance.

Our cause as Montana Democrats is as simple and as ambitious as the purpose stated in the Constitution of the United States: We strive to create "a more perfect union." Like the founders of this nation, we believe that such a union must be a government of the people and by the people dedicated to securing for every single citizen the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Like the delegates who crafted Montana's constitution, we believe that a more perfect Montana requires that we secure even more expansive liberties. We treasure our explicit right to the privacy of our persons, our property, and our communications; our right to a clean and healthful environment; and our right to be notified, to observe, and to participate when our governing bodies make decisions.

As Montanans, we are deeply grateful for the heritage, opportunity, freedom, landscape, and lifestyle we enjoy in this "last best place." As Democrats we believe that, by ensuring and expanding these blessings for every Montanan, we improve the quality of life for all Montanans.

Within this framework of belief, Montana Democrats are guided by these enduring principles:

Agriculture and Rural Development

We believe in the value of strong family farms and ranches as essential to our Montana heritage, the life-blood of our rural towns and an important part of our economy. We must create incentives and inspiration for younger generations to return to the family ranch or farm, seize new opportunities in agriculture, or successfully hold the remote jobs in rural Montana made possible by reliable infrastructure.

American Indians

We believe in the equality of all people, but as Montanans we have a particular obligation to Montana's first people. We recognize that Montana's American Indians are not only Montanans, but also members of their own tribal nations with the sovereignty to govern themselves and the right to preserve their cultural integrity.

Cultural Enrichment

We believe that access to the arts, libraries, museums, and cultural experiences is an essential component of the quality of life and the economy in Montana. We are committed to ensuring that those who create and provide this access are supported and encouraged to prompt us to imagine, marvel, reflect, and learn.

Energy and Climate Change

Our climate is in a state of emergency. Montana Democrats believe we must reduce our reliance on fossil fuels through a combination of energy conservation, energy efficiency, and the development of clean, renewable energy sources. We believe we can achieve this goal AND create – or provide transitions into – good Montana jobs.

Good Government

We view government as the means by which individuals work together to solve mutual problems, balance competing interests, and accomplish common goals. Good government meets its constitutional obligations to protect health and safety and to promote community, commerce, and culture. Honoring the principles of sovereignty, local control, and separation of powers, good government is open, accountable, and responsive to the people.

Health Care and Human Services

We are dedicated to ensuring quality of life and equality of opportunity for all individuals and families, regardless of their socio-economic status. Fundamental to such quality and

equality are the basic necessities of life, including, at a minimum, health care, education, shelter, adequate nutrition, a livable environment and climate, human dignity, and lives free of violence. We affirm and support each individual's freedom, control, and privacy with respect to their own bodies and health care decisions.

Housing

We believe that access to safe, adequate, sanitary and affordable housing is a human right for all Montanans. When both private and public sectors work together to construct enough housing, working class families gain the ability to own a home, renters pay less, and working Montanans' personal wealth and human resources improve the state's economy for everyone.

Human and Civil Rights

We believe that neither a peaceful planet nor a democratic society can survive without appreciation for the diversity of all people and respect for the unique value of each person. We embrace the rights guaranteed by the constitutions of our state and nation, recognizing that the meaning and application of those rights evolve as our knowledge and understanding as human beings in a democratic republic evolve.

Hunting, Fishing, and Outdoor Recreation

We recognize that the opportunity for Montanans to enjoy our spectacular landscapes, clean waters, and abundant fish and wildlife is an integral part of our heritage, identity, lifestyle, and economy. We believe in public ownership of the fish, wildlife, streams, and rivers of our state and rely on our government to hold these resources in trust for the beneficial use of our citizens and future generations.

International Relations

In the spirit of the late Senator Mike Mansfield, we believe America should treat all nations and peoples with the same dignity and respect we expect of one another. We believe our greatest strength and our greatest security lie in our effective use of commerce, aid, diplomacy, and collaboration to improve the well-being and good will of all peoples and all nations.

Jobs and the Economy

We know it requires both government and private business to create the quality jobs necessary to sustain a healthy economy. Government at both federal and state levels is responsible for funding infrastructure, housing, education programs, and economically and environmentally sound growth policies that are major job creators and strengthen and diversify our private-sector economy.

Labor

We believe stable jobs with livable salaries and wages are another cornerstone of a stable economy and a healthy society. Because the vast majority of Montanans make their living as wage-earners, we seek fair compensation for their labor so that they can provide for their families and sustain their communities. Montana workers deserve safety, security, and dignity as conditions of their employment, as well as conditions of their retirement after a lifetime of hard work.

Public Education

We believe public education not only acts as the primary catalyst for a strong economy, upward mobility, and the quality of life in Montana, but also fosters the lasting bonds of understanding, acceptance, and community that make Montana such a desirable place to live. We are therefore committed to a continuum of high-quality, equitable public education opportunities with adequate state funding to develop the potential of every Montanan and of Montana itself.

Public Safety and Access to Justice

We believe the best approach to reducing crime is providing the education, opportunities, and social services that prevent it. When crime does occur, we support approaches that seek to hold the offender accountable, restore the victim, safeguard the public, and rehabilitate the offender. We expect our justice system to operate impartially and efficiently to protect and enforce the rights of all citizens equally, to provide every citizen with a venue to seek redress of grievances, and to ensure the safety and well-being of our communities.

Stewardship of Our Natural Resources

The teeming bounty of Montana's natural resources and wild country has always been at the heart of our prosperity, our heritage, and our lifestyle as Montanans. With the planet in a state of climate emergency, our 21st-century challenge is to ensure that these resources not only contribute to the strong economy needed to sustain families and communities, but also provide the clean and healthful environment that is our constitutional right.

Taxation

We seek progressive, broad-based, equitable taxes that reflect and enhance our changing economy, adequately supporting a full range of quality public services and public education. Republican rule has shifted property taxes that should be paid by the largest corporations onto the backs of average Montana homeowners, renters and small

businesses. Republican rule has also distorted Montana's previously progressive income tax system to the advantage of the super-wealthy. Democrats will correct these Republican inequities in taxation.

Veterans and Active Military

We ask Americans in the military to risk their lives and disrupt their families' lives to serve our country. In gratitude for their sacrifice, Montana Democrats regard as sacred our obligation to care for America's military – during active duty and for the rest of their lives. This means championing proactive, effective healthcare and seeking tax, housing, and workforce assistance that ensure veterans can afford to live and thrive in our state.

Women

As Montana Democratic women, we are committed to securing equal opportunities in education, employment, and leadership, an unencumbered Constitutional right for every woman to vote, and an independent ability to make personal healthcare decisions, thus ensuring safe, healthy and nurturing environments for all women. We support women's autonomy and their equitable role, not only in determining local, state and national policies, but also in making decisions to meet their own needs and communities.

Principles, Positions and Action Agendas

Agriculture and Rural Development

We believe in the value of strong family farms and ranches as essential to our Montana heritage, the life-blood of our rural towns and an important part of our economy. We must create incentives and inspiration for younger generations to return to the family ranch or farm, seize new opportunities in agriculture, or successfully hold the remote jobs in rural Montana made possible by reliable infrastructure.

We support:

- Agricultural policies designed to promote and enhance decentralized, sustainable, community-based family farm agricultural production.
- Measures to ensure products produced in Montana are identified as such, labeled as such,and receive fair market prices based on their quality and production location.
- Increasing our in-state processing capabilities across agriculture markets to reduce risk and dependence on out-of-state facilities.
- Investments in the infrastructure – e.g., high speed internet and reliable cell phone service – to support innovation in agriculture and recruitment of workers to rural Montana.

- Fair trade policies for Montana agricultural products.
- Value-added agricultural enterprise.
- Marketing and other promotional efforts emphasizing the high quality of Montana's agricultural products.
- Competitive and reasonably priced transportation of farm inputs and commodities.
- A financial security net with a goal of no net loss in the population of family agriculture producers.
- Legislation that enhances food safety.
- Legislation that enhances food security.
- A combination of progressive land use and tax policies.
- Estate and finance laws that encourage the transfer of agricultural operations from parents to children or to other family farm and ranch owners.
- Eminent domain laws that prioritize all surface property rights.
- Policies that provide reasonable fees and rental rates for agricultural land.
- Dedicating federal and state resources to assist farmers and ranchers to learn about and adopt practices proven to increase soil health, water retention, and the resiliency and productivity of their crops and livestock.
- Sufficient funding for ag research at our institutions of higher learning, for ag experiment stations, and for cooperative extension services, as well as youth ag activities and curriculum.
- The use of fee title acquisition, conservation easements, or leases to help farms stay in the family while contributing to the protection of wildlife habitat and open space, even if there is a net gain of public land in the state.
- Strengthening subdivision review regulations to protect family farms, maintain open space, and address wildlife habitat needs.
- Federal farm programs to ensure market-derived commodity prices and incomes at levels that sustain and advance family-scale farm and ranch production.
- Effective federal, state, county, and municipal conservation and stewardship programs.
- Expanding agro-tourism opportunities for Montana farmers and ranchers.
- The right to repair for owners of agricultural equipment.
- Sustainable timber harvest and management.
- Public land grazing rights that are inclusive of all livestock.

We oppose:

- A centralized, globalized, industrialized, vertically integrated model of agricultural production.
- The concentration and control of U.S. agricultural production, processing and marketing by multi-national corporations.
- Introduction of genetically modified wheat varieties.

- Tax and policy structures which cause undue difficulty or duress for small-business and family farmers and ranchers.
- Ownership or leasing of agricultural land by international foreign interests.
- Federal government subsidies that compete with U.S. farmers and agricultural businesses.
- A volatile program of federal government tariffs that may interfere with U.S. agricultural markets.

Agriculture and Rural Development Action Agenda:

- Require COOL (country of origin labeling) for meat products and GMO (genetically modified organisms) labeling on food products.
- Promote and aggressively market Montana agricultural commodities.
- Develop and promote community-based and regional co-ops.
- Provide sufficient funding for state hail insurance and grain labs.
- Improve and expand the USDA all-risk crop insurance program.
- Develop measures to protect family farmers from liability resulting from the introduction of genetically engineered crops.
- Investigate and conduct field hearings on commodity prices and market manipulation.
- Investigate and rigorously enforce federal antitrust laws that affect agriculture.
- Require that railroads offer fair shipping rates to Montana farmers or be subject to regulation as a rail monopoly.
- Develop a long-term solution to eradicate brucellosis in livestock and wildlife.
- Improve Montana's capacity to produce, package, and distribute a wider range of locally grown food, such as Farm to School and Farm to Table programs.
- Incorporate locally grown, locally sourced food, fiber, and beverages at all official functions of the Montana Democratic Party.
- Renew the Federal Estate Tax provisions and adjust federal estate tax exemption levels to better accommodate the exceptionally high valuation of agricultural land and equipment.
- Prevent the closure of Montana's rural and frontier post offices.
- Allow Montana farmers to grow industrial hemp.
- Provide educational programming to prepare current and future producers for the economic challenges agriculture faces as a result of the dramatic changes caused by emerging technologies and climate.
- Protect groundwater and rural water rights and prevent potential degradation from industrialization, appropriation and discharge.

American Indians

We believe in the equality of all people, but as Montanans we have a particular obligation to Montana's first people. We recognize that Montana's American Indians are not only Montanans, but also members of their own tribal nations with the sovereignty to govern themselves and the right to preserve their cultural integrity.

We support:

- The sovereignty since time immemorial of Montana's American Indian tribes acknowledged by the treaties and the validity of all court decisions, contracts, and agreements of the federal and state government with all Indian nations.
- Montana's constitutional commitment to preserve the cultural integrity of American Indians.
- Recruitment and/or appointment of American Indians to leadership positions within the party and at all levels of government to ensure their representation in policy discussions and decision-making.
- Policies and programs to help Montana's urban Indians overcome barriers.
- The religious freedom of American Indians and the protection of their sacred, cultural and religious properties.
- Equitable, accessible, and culturally sensitive delivery of effective social services and high-quality, affordable healthcare to American Indians, including mental health services and suicide prevention programs.
- Tribal jurisdiction over all Indian children, in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act.
- The right of tribal governments to develop, manage, and regulate their natural resources while protecting water and air quality and the integrity of their sacred and cultural sites.
- Proactive and equitable efforts to increase economic development, employment opportunities, and the prosperity of all tribal nations and of all American Indians, on and off the reservations.
- Good-faith negotiation on tribal-state compacts, including gaming, revenue-sharing, and water compacts.
- Equitable allocation and distribution of state and federal funds to ensure that American Indians in Montana receive their fair share of appropriated funds.
- Intergovernmental agreements that allow tax revenues generated on Indian reservations to be used to support reservation economies and fund essential services.
- Organized outreach as a party to Montana's American Indians and to all Montanans on issues central to the advancement of American Indians in Montana.
- Equitable access for American Indians registering to vote and voting.
- Providing services to the family members of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP); generating awareness of MMIP among community members in

general, as well as individual MMIP cases; and collaborating with tribal, federal, state and local officials to respond to the disproportionately high rates of violence, especially reports of the missing and murdered, among indigenous people.
- Integrating tribal languages within the Indian Education for All curriculums of all public schools in an effort to revitalize, preserve, and promote the recovery of these languages, and ensure that teachers of the languages receive all assistance and compensation necessary to succeed in these efforts.
- Establishing a commission to investigate and document, for the first time in history, cultural genocide, assimilation practices and human rights violations of Indian Boarding Schools in the United States.
- Vigorous pursuit of justice in cases of crimes against American Indians across state, federal, and tribal jurisdictions.
- The Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission supporting Communities of Interest, including Tribal Nations as political entities.
- American Indian hunting, fishing, gathering, and grazing rights guaranteed under but not limited by treaties.
- Bison restoration as determined by Tribes.
- Intergovernmental relationships need to extend to all Federally Recognized Tribal Nations, communities, and reservations.

We oppose:

- Hate crimes, including sexual violence, targeting American Indians.
- The falsehood that American Indians no longer exist.
- Legal systems which prevent Tribes from exercising authority over their lands, contributing to the prevalence of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP).
- The falsehood that American Indians do not pay taxes.

American Indians Action Agenda:

- Provide adequate, ongoing funding for the continued implementation of Indian Education for All.
- Increase state funding for non-beneficiary students and additional resources for all students who attend Montana's tribal colleges.
- Continue funding and provide due diligence in the use of funds for Closing the Achievement Gap for American Indian Students.
- Expand efforts to preserve American Indian languages.
- Increase block grants for American Indian entities and direct tribal funding.
- Provide adequate ongoing funding for the Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education (MACIE).
- Investigate and provide necessary change to Indian Health Services to provide adequate health care to Montana's American Indians.

- Expand efforts to encourage voter registration and enhance voting opportunities on reservations.
- Support youth suicide prevention programs, including culture-based services.
- Ensure that credits from tribal colleges are transferable to state colleges and universities.
- Encourage financial institutions to actively assist in use of VA and FHA opportunities for American Indian housing.
- Assist Tribal Colleges, High Schools, and grant funded programs in establishing trade courses tied to the Montana Department of Transportation and the Montana Department of Labor accredited apprenticeships.
- Consult with and create an Inter-Governmental Agreement between the State of Montana and each Tribal government to allow Tribes to exercise some law enforcement authority on behalf of the State; enabling Tribal Police to prosecute crimes over which, per the Major Crimes Act and General Crimes Act, only the State would have jurisdiction.
- Recognize Tribal nations as being among the largest employers in rural Montana, who contribute billions of dollars to the state's economy every year - through tribal governments, colleges, health systems, gaming, energy, agriculture, and technology enterprises.

Public Safety and Access to Justice

We believe the best approach to reducing crime is providing the education, opportunities, and social services that prevent it. When crime does occur, we support approaches that seek to hold the offender accountable, to restore the victim, safeguard the public, and rehabilitate the offender. We expect our justice system to operate impartially and efficiently to protect and enforce the rights of all citizens equally, to provide every citizen with an affordable, accessible, and timely venue to seek redress of grievances, and to ensure the safety and well-being of our communities.

Public Safety

We support:

- The assurance of public safety through effective and efficient responses to criminal acts.
- The right to keep and bear arms, as defined by the Constitutions of our state and nation, and the responsible exercise of that right, including education on gun safety practices and the supervision of children in the use of firearms.
- Personal responsibility and accountability of the convicted for restitution to victims and communities.

- The assurance of the safety of marginalized groups through effective and efficient responses to hate crimes, services for victims, and accountability for perpetrators.
- Legislation, law enforcement and judicial practices that protect potential and actual victims of human trafficking, assault, and abuse.
- Crime prevention through government and community efforts to fight domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, youth violence, elder abuse, child abuse and neglect.
- Evidence-based programs for crime prevention and rehabilitation that emphasize education and treatment to address developmental differences of the young and the needs of those with mental health disorders and substance abuse disorders.
- Concerted and coordinated efforts to reduce the disproportionate number of American Indians incarcerated in Montana's correctional system.
- Addressing substance abuse disorders and mental health disorders as public health crises, rather than criminal issues.
- Protection of all Montanans against predatory, fraudulent, or negligent business practices and corporate accountability for such practices.
- Holding those found guilty of assault or abuse accountable and prioritizing the protection of the victim.
- Ensuring that all children and educators can learn and work free from the threat of violence, including violence from firearms.
- Policies that promote officers with a record of deescalation and community care and holds officers accountable for unnecessary and unwanted violence in their communities and at home.
- Minimize requirements to build more prisons by addressing mental health issues that lead to crime.
- Expand crime victim's compensation funds (state legislators) after victim's compensation fund is exhausted.
- Raising victim compensation (federal legislators) to ensure coverage of medical expenses, childcare, crime scene clean up, etc.
- Codify victim's rights.
- Provide access to education, job training, and other rehabilitative programs to reduce recidivism and support successful reentry.

We oppose:

- The use of incarceration for any purpose other than the protection of the public and the rehabilitation of offenders.
- The use of prison dollars outside Montana.
- For-profit prisons and detention centers.
- Unnecessary and dangerous "use of force" methods when arresting or restraining persons suspected of committing a crime.

- The use of mass surveillance systems in the United States by any entity, for any purpose, including use by law enforcement agencies in crime detection, evaluation, or punishment.

Public Safety Action Agenda:

- Increase resources for training, investigation, prosecution, and coordinated community responses to sexual assault, human trafficking, and domestic violence.
- Adequately fund the crime victim's compensation fund.
- Advocate for policies that address and prevent gun violence.
- Provide vigorous prosecution of investment scams and embezzlement.
- Amend Montana Constitution, Article II (Bill of Rights), Section 14 (Adult rights) by adding after "alcoholic beverages" the phrase "and establish the legal age for purchasing, consuming, or possessing marijuana at 21 years of age or older."
- Remove marijuana from Schedule 1 of the Federal Controlled Substances Act.
- Pursue State and Federal enforcement to ensure corporate accountability for insufficient data security, unlawful data sales, deceptive privacy practices, and the misuse of personal information in ways harmful to individuals and our communities.
- Ban the use of for-profit prisons and detention centers in Montana in perpetuity.
- Reaffirm and expand the provisions of MCA 61-8-203 and the changes made to it by MT HB 531(2009), protecting Montanans from the use of automated systems in law enforcement including mass-surveillance cameras, sensors, and other information networks, to guarantee our right to privacy as per our Montana constitution.

Access to Justice

We support:

- Judicial campaigns and elections that ensure the judiciary is independent and uninfluenced by political, religious, or ideological biases or agendas.
- The right of all people, regardless of socio-economic status, to assert their rights and to seek redress of their grievances in court.
- Tribal sovereignty that ensures independence and authority for the tribal court system.
- The independence and authority that tribal sovereignty ensures for the tribal court system.
- Adequate resources to ensure speedy due process for all those appearing before Montana courts.
- The reform and revision of the criminal bond system and restrictions in order to guarantee that all parties avoid jail and restrictions on their liberty prior to trial.
- Social justice reforms for all groups of minority and historically marginalized communities, including but not limited to indigenous people and tribes, black and brown communities, people of color, and the LGBTQ+ community.

We oppose:

- Any laws or policies, including campaign contribution laws, which could have the effect of compromising the independence of the judiciary.
- Actions of our justice systems that lead to disparities among Montana citizens, including relying upon cash bail and pretrial detentions when other options are available.
- State courts' jurisdiction over disputes on tribal land.

Access to Justice Action Agenda:

- Provide public funding for Montana's judicial races.
- Adequately fund the Office of the State Public Defender, Montana Legal Services Association, and the judicial system statewide.
- Ensure that equal access to effective healthcare is available to all persons within the criminal justice system.
- Re-institute the merit-based appointment process conducted by an independent Judicial Nominating Commission, as contemplated by the delegates to the 1972 Constitutional Convention and enacted by the Montana legislature in 1974.

Cultural Enrichment

We believe that access to the arts, libraries, museums, and cultural experiences is an essential component of the quality of life and the economy in Montana. We are committed to ensuring that those who create and provide this access are supported and encouraged to prompt us to imagine, marvel, reflect, and learn.

We support:

- Public libraries in all our communities, as well as the policies and best practices that allow this crucial democratic institution to flourish, providing services to all members of our communities without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, gender or gender identity, or sexual preference.
- Programs within and beyond Montana's education institutions that develop Montanans' artistic talents and stimulate our appreciation of the arts and our awareness of diverse cultures.
- Efforts to preserve and interpret historic sites with continual emphasis on factual and accurate portrayals of our diverse cultures and histories.
- Public funding sufficient to provide affordable access to public libraries and museums.
- Diverse, broadly available, and inclusive public art, performances, and cultural events.

- Inclusion of artists and cultural organization professionals in the design and creation of artistic and cultural elements in public buildings and spaces, with special emphasis on Native and indigenous artists from Montana.
- Multi-media public broadcasting, including community-based public radio and public access television.

We oppose:

- Intrusions on the freedom of expression and inquiry guaranteed by the First Amendment.
- Unauthorized use of artists' intellectual property.
- Censorship in public schools and libraries.
- Reduction or elimination of educational programs in the arts and humanities or funding for public libraries, museums, and cultural centers.

Cultural Enrichment Action Agenda:

- Provide adequate funding for museums, libraries, art institutions, theaters, and performing arts centers.
- Continue state and local support for public broadcasting, public radio, and public access television.
- Restore and/or preserve arts and humanities programs at all educational levels through adequate local, state, and national funding.
- Secure funding to continue development of the Montana Heritage Center in Helena, MT.
- Secure funding for a complete and fully accessible virtual heritage museum for all current and future assets.

Energy and Climate Change

Our planet is in a state of climate emergency. Montana Democrats believe that we must reduce our reliance on fossil fuels through a combination of energy conservation, energy efficiency, and the development of clean, renewable energy sources. We believe that we can achieve this goal AND create – or provide transitions into – good Montana jobs.

We support:

- A utility regulation model that ensures Montana energy consumers are encouraged to take advantage of Montana's plentiful and affordable clean energy resources.
- Demand-side management methods and integrated power grids that reduce energy consumption and costs for homeowners and businesses and speed the transfer from reliance on fossil fuels to clean energy power.
- Programs to train or retrain Montana workers for tomorrow's energy jobs.

- Incentives for Montana's entrepreneurs, businesses, university system, and government agencies to develop clean, reliable, and affordable energy sources that attract high-wage, high-tech jobs.
- Universal services programs that address the issues of affordability, efficiency, conservation, and renewability in energy consumption.
- Reduced reliance on petroleum markets that drive up costs for the citizens and businesses in this transportation-dependent, northern-climate state.
- The establishment of strategies and protocols for capture, transportation, sequestration and liability for disposal of CO2, with a priority to create and conserve sustainable jobs.
- Programs investing in wage, job, and retirement security for workers dislocated due to the transition away from fossil fuels and incentivizing the renewable energy industry to employ skilled workers.
- Action to mitigate climate change that preserves our skilled and trained workforce, bolsters our local economies, and preserves the health of our environment and communities.
- Industrial energy users paying the full cost of energy needs and infrastructure without burdening Montanans.

Energy and Climate Change Action Agenda:

- Adopt a renewable energy policy for Montana.
- Create a comprehensive plan to explore technologies for coal gasification, advanced biofuels, and a sustainable biofuels industry in Montana.
- Create and expand state and local government revolving loan funds and other public financial instruments to foster sustainable and efficient energy improvements in Montana homes and businesses.
- Terminate the 18-month tax holiday for horizontal drilling for oil and gas production.
- Create an Oil and Gas Trust Fund.
- Adopt robust enforceable regulations on data centers, including but not limited to strict and attainable environmental standards; legal protections to protect ratepayers from cost increases; and conserve water quality and quantity and those that protect current water rights holders; a transparent process that ensures community input; requirements to use a skilled and trained local workforce; fair taxation that funds essential public services; and incentives to invest in our energy grid and transmission system to the benefit of all Montana ratepayers.
- Creation of a separate energy rate for data centers to protect existing customers from subsidizing data center consumption, grid investment, and any associated infrastructure development for data centers.

- A two-year moratorium on approval, construction or development of any large-scale data center or industrial facility consuming 20 megawatts or more of electricity, during which developers must provide verified third-party impact studies and detailed community plans, and the Montana Legislature must establish an enforceable regulatory framework protecting ratepayers, workers, local communities, water, and Montanans' way of life.

Good Government

We view government as the means by which individuals work together to solve mutual problems, balance competing interests, and accomplish common goals. Good government meets its constitutional obligations to protect health and safety and to promote community, commerce, and culture. Honoring the principles of sovereignty, local control, and separation of powers, good government at every level is open, accountable, and responsive to the people.

We support:

- Montana's constitution as a vital document establishing the rule of law in our state, providing the means by which we govern ourselves, and enshrining values that define our democracy and provide Montanans with the nation's most expansive rights, the strongest protections, and the greatest ability to participate in our government.
- Local control, along with the local discretion and flexibility needed for responsive, efficient, and effective provision of services to the public.
- Open, transparent and accessible government so that Montanans can exercise vigilance in holding our federal, state and local officials accountable and can take part in government decision-making.
- The rights of local, tribal, state, and federal governments to enact and implement non-discrimination ordinances that make our communities welcoming places for Montanans of any sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- Cooperative and mutually respectful efforts among local, state, tribal, and federal levels of government to provide services and to respond to emerging needs.
- Collaborative efforts between government bodies and private entities to create a robust and modern infrastructure that meets needs and expands opportunities for all communities and all Montanans.
- Open, free, fair, and transparent elections, including Montana's open primary election, which encourage participation by all citizens and acknowledge that one person's voting power is equivalent to every other person's.
- Campaign finance reform, including amending the Constitution to ensure citizens' voices are not drowned out by special interests and highly financed corporate interests.

- The assurance of voting rights to all citizens and expanded voter participation, particularly in historically disenfranchised populations.
- Fair redistricting of all governmental jurisdictions based on a thorough and accurate count of population.
- The statutory authority of local boards of health to protect the public health of communities.
- Governmental decision-making based on scientific methodology and verifiable facts.
- Mechanisms to address poor public board performance in order to assure accountability to the community.
- The ability of citizens to achieve meaningful, structural change through voting.
- The right of Montana citizens to initiate or refer legislation through the petition process.

We oppose:

- "Packing" public boards, a practice that undermines public confidence in their decisions.
- The diversion of public funding to private entities for the provision of public services.
- All efforts to suppress lawful voting through repeal of current practices, the imposition of unnecessary barriers to voting, intimidation, and disinformation.
- Legislation or other governmental intrusion into decisions reserved to the privacy of individuals.
- Cost-shifting or unfunded mandates that burden one level of government with the obligations of another.
- Recognizing corporate human rights under the Constitution and money as protected speech.
- The misrepresentation of party or issue affiliation by election candidates, political organizations, ballot initiative groups, or other organizations or individuals.
- Any gerrymandering.
- The privatization or under-funding of essential public services, such as the United States Postal Service.
- The partisan interference of elected officials in the initiative process.
- The Public Service Commission or any other state governmental entity allowing corporations or business interests to avoid Montana's right-to-know provisions by claiming secrecy during formal governmental proceedings, ignoring the public's "right-to-know" under the guise of falsely claiming business or trade secret protection, which are not protected by the Montana Constitution.
- The actions of the State Land Board in removing department professionals in the initial evaluation of state land swaps so the politically elected officials can assume responsibility for the swaps unto themselves, making the swap decisions less professional and more political.

- The elimination of scientific research by unvetted federal budget cuts.
- Presidential rule by decree that excludes Congress from its constitutional policymaking role.
- Profiteering by elected officials.
- The trading of stock by members of Congress and the elected executive branch of Government.

Good Government Action Agenda:

- Resist any partisan effort to repeal and replace Montana's constitution.
- Provide transportation options accessible to all Montanans and "complete street" provisions that allow for all forms of transportation.
- Establish adequate funding and staffing for the office of the Commissioner of Political Practices.
- Pursue options for publicly funding electoral campaigns at local and state levels.
- Preserve election-day registration.
- Support a Constitutional remedy to the Citizens United decision, clarifying that Bill of Rights protections apply only to natural persons and ensuring that governments may limit the amount of money any individual or entity spends to influence candidates or elections.
- Designate the day of the general election as a state holiday.
- Enact and implement online voter registration and automatic voter registration.
- Respond to misrepresentation of party affiliation, ballot initiative or issue by election candidates or political groups.
- Repeal the Ballot Interference Prevention Act, which makes it more difficult for Montanans to exercise the right to vote.
- Pass a Constitutional amendment to establish an affirmative right to vote and have one's vote counted equally.
- Prohibit government agencies from acquiring or purchasing personal information from data brokers when obtaining the same information directly would require a warrant, subpoena, court order, consent, or other legal process.
- Repeal MCA 13-1-125, once again permitting State, County, and Local governments to adopt Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV) as they see fit.
- Repeal restrictions on local governments and citizens from regulation of data centers under the auspices of "Right to Compute".
- Establish a working group, designated by the executive board, within the Montana Democratic Party to develop a "Code of Conduct" for all Democratic candidates with respect to the influence of dark money in our elections and primary process.
- Approach the legislature to put forward a constitutional initiative to recognize the concept of Executive Privilege does not exist under Montana Law, and governmental

entities cannot use such claims of privilege to avoid the government's requirement to meet the constitutional "right-to-know of its citizens".

- Urge the Legislature to pass a constitutional referendum proposing an amendment to the constitution in which the structure and operations of the Judicial Nominations Commission that were used for 49 years until 2021 are locked into place by the constitution, ensuring a non-partisan process in the selection of judges.
- Establish formal procedures within the Montana Democratic Party for the prompt investigation, transparent resolution, and public accountability of credible allegations of harassment, abuse, or misconduct against elected officials, candidates, or party staff, ensuring that such allegations are not concealed by colleagues, party leadership, or institutional incumbency.

Health Care and Human Services

We are dedicated to ensuring quality of life and equality of opportunity for all individuals and families, regardless of their socio-economic status. Fundamental to such quality and equality are the basic necessities of life, including, at a minimum, health care, education, shelter, adequate nutrition, a livable environment and climate, human dignity, and lives free of violence. We affirm and support each individual's freedom, control, and privacy with respect to their own bodies and health care decisions.

Health Care

We support:

- Health care as a human right.
- Any and all efforts to address Montana's growing public health crisis of suicide.
- Affordable, transparent, and accessible health care for all Montanans.
- Montanans' right to choose their health care providers.
- Montanans' right to keep their personal medical information private.
- Patient-centered approaches to prevent and treat chronic disease.
- Effective responses to mental illness, substance abuse disorders, and gambling addiction.
- Health insurance programs that encourage preventative care, provide coverage parity for mental health services and substance abuse disorders, and preserve adequate coverage for low-income Montanans.
- Proactive measures to address the needs of Montana's aging population.
- Improved funding for rural health care and codify emergency management services as essential.
- Community-based mental illness and addiction crisis intervention and recovery as the preferred approach.

- Policies and practices grounded in public health, science, and expertise to allow state, local, and tribal public health departments to respond to and protect our communities from outbreaks of infectious diseases and other community health threats.
- Addressing the skyrocketing costs of prescription drugs, so that all Montanans can afford their medications.
- Protecting a person's right to abortion, contraception, and other reproductive health care.
- The continuation and improvement of the current Medicaid programs in Montana.
- Adequate funding for the state's mental health institutions. [insert bullet] Transgender healthcare and gender-affirming care.

We oppose:

- Laws and other government actions that interfere with the privacy rights of individuals to make their own health decisions, including decisions about contraception, child-bearing, and dying.
- Limiting access to legal health care services associated with individuals' private decisions.
- Privatizing Medicare or changing to a voucher system.
- Efforts to remove or limit health insurance protections for people with pre-existing conditions.
- The consolidation of private healthcare monopolies, especially through private equity purchases, and the excessive growth of administrative costs and salaries.
- Attempts to vilify those who work to help the homeless.

Health Care Action Agenda:

- Continue efforts to sustain and expand Medicaid to all low-income Montanans, as allowed by federal law.
- Establish affordable and comprehensive prescription drug benefit opportunities for all Montanans.
- Advocate for state legislation and other public policies in schools and communities to address the public health crisis of suicide in MT and work for awareness and prevention.
- Replicate programs like Insure Montana that help small businesses provide health insurance to their employees.
- Adequately fund the Healthy Montana Kids Plan.
- Dedicate all proceeds from tobacco industry litigation to fund public health programs, including health care for children, smoking cessation and prevention, health-related research, health education and CHIP.
- Provide state and federal funding for stem cell research.
- Pursue strategies to continue health care reform.

- Preserve state regulation of health insurance.
- Give the Montana Commissioner of Insurance the authority to take action against insurance companies that unreasonably raise health insurance rates.
- Implement programs and coordinate efforts among health care teams to improve outreach, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of individuals with diabetes.
- Provide safe and legal access to medical marijuana.
- Reinvest in the infrastructure that lets Montanans receive mental health care and support in their communities, including the expansion of affordable access to crisis support, substance use disorder treatment, peer support specialists, therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and other mental health care, especially in rural, tribal, and other underserved communities.
- Renew the existing Montana Medicaid Expansion law and eliminate the "sunset" provision in the law.
- Repeal Montana's certificate of need law.

Human Services

We support:

- Collaboration and cooperation between public, private, non-profit, and faith-based organizations in adopting policies and services that strengthen all families and communities.
- Funding to prevent, diminish, and respond effectively to domestic violence and child abuse through education, early intervention, more resources for shelters, adequate staffing, and treatment, including residential treatment.
- Effective and accessible senior services, including ombudsman and advocacy services in all facets of senior living experiences.
- Developing and assessing effective measures to protect the health and safety of Montana's seniors.
- Full inclusion of people with disabilities and Montana's senior citizens in our communities through a well-funded network of community-based services.
- Full compliance with the philosophy and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to allow everyone to lead a productive, dignified life.
- Safe, affordable, and accessible housing for all Montanans and respect for the rights of renters.
- Efforts to help the homeless and housing-insecure to obtain decent shelter, social services, medical services, educational programs, and other support services that will help them maintain stable living circumstances.
- Strengthening programs that feed those who are hungry.
- Access to affordable childcare.

We oppose:

- Any privatization of Social Security.

Human Services Access Agenda:

- Ensure access to affordable, high-quality child care for all families who need it by investing in the creation of new providers, attracting and retaining child care workers, and reducing out-of-pocket costs for working and middle-class families.
- Implement policies and procedures to expand options other than nursing homes for low- and moderate-income seniors in need of elder care services and long-term care insurance.
- Accelerate the transition to integrated health care, including integrated care for co-occurring mental health and addiction.
- Restore adequate funding for Montanans with developmental disabilities, mental health needs, children and seniors, and other human services clients.
- Eliminate the "benefits cliff" for people who are abruptly removed from public assistance after a minimal wage increase and allow for a gradual transition instead.
- Fully fund DPHHS to support Title X for family planning services.
- Continue commitments to Social Security and Medicare programs, railroad and all federal retirement programs, and the Federal Older Americans Act.
- Increase awareness of the need to provide full ADA accessibility in workplaces, parking areas, theaters, courthouses, schools, and other public facilities.
- Ensure a state foster care system that supports kids, families, and communities.

Housing

We believe that access to safe, adequate, sanitary and affordable housing is a human right for all Montanans. When both private and public sectors work together to construct enough housing, working class families gain the ability to own a home, renters pay less, and working Montanans' personal wealth and human resources improve the state's economy for everyone.

We support:

- Efforts to help the homeless and housing-insecure to obtain decent shelter, social services, medical services, educational programs, and other support services that will help them maintain stable living circumstances.
- Safe, affordable, and accessible housing for all Montanans and respect for the rights of renters.
- Regulation that allows more housing in every neighborhood, removing barriers to both subsidized affordable and market rate housing.
- Policies that support current residents having stable housing choices amid growth.

- Housing permit processes that empower new and incumbent homeowners, as well as renters, to participate equally.
- State and federal housing finance reforms that extend terms reserved for single-family homes to townhome and multi-family dwellings.

We oppose:

- Efforts to exclude working-class or low-income Montanans from affluent and high-opportunity neighborhoods or public school enrollment boundaries.
- Discrimination in housing on the basis of sex, gender, race or religion.
- Policies and structures that incentivize communities to say no to new homes, including tax systems and car-centric transportation systems.
- Disposal or use of state or federal public lands for housing unless no private, developable land exists in a community.
- Disposal of use of state or federal public lands for development or uses related to such.

Housing Action Agenda:

- Increase funding for subsidized affordable housing through a wide variety of mechanisms, including direct subsidies and non-profit entities.
- Streamline the housing permit process to make it more expedient and remove arbitrary barriers to both subsidized affordable and market rate housing while preserving environmental protections and building standards.
- Regulation of short-term rentals.
- Incentivize workforce training in construction trades and prefabricated housing technology.
- Restore public input on statutory zone change approval processes to require notice of all residents within 1/4 mile of application, including renters and landowners.
- Abolish “valid protest” policies that require a supermajority of the governing body to approve zone changes.
- Allow duplex and Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) residential buildings in all residential zones.
- Reauthorize the Coal Trust Multifamily Homes Loan Program.
- Create a Montana Workforce Housing Tax Credit program.
- Bring the Montana Historic Tax Credit program into alignment with other state historic tax credit programs by 1) allowing for transferability, and 2) increasing the state tax credit percentage from an effective 5% to 20% of qualified rehabilitation expenses on a qualified rehabilitated building.

Human and Civil Rights

We believe that neither a peaceful planet nor a democratic society can survive without appreciation for the diversity of all people and respect for the unique value of each person. We embrace the rights guaranteed by the constitutions of our state and nation, recognizing that the meaning and application of those rights evolve as our knowledge and understanding as human beings in a democratic republic evolve.

We support:

- A state, nation, and world free of want, fear, harassment, discrimination, torture, and bullying.
- Equal treatment of all individuals before the law, regardless of race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical or intellectual ability, physical or mental health status, language of origin, national origin, or marital status.
- Equal opportunities for housing, employment, and education available to all individuals.
- Every individual's right to hold personal beliefs without interference from those with different beliefs and the right to make private decisions without government restriction or intervention.
- Federal, state, local, tribal, and private efforts that recognize our shared responsibility to respond to every individual's right to human dignity and life's basic necessities.
- Affirmative action to provide opportunities for members of historically marginalized groups to pursue meaningful, substantial, and gainful activity.
- The right of all persons with special needs to live and to be served in the least restrictive environment appropriate to those needs.
- A free and open internet, which is fundamental to free speech and the open exchange of information and ideas.
- Freedom of speech and the press and universal access to information through all media, including the internet.
- Respecting and protecting all gender identities and welcoming them within the Montana Democratic Party.
- The rights embodied in the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Montana.
- The rights of local, tribal, state, and federal governments to enact and implement non-discrimination ordinances that make our communities welcoming places for Montanans of any sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- The right of every Montanan to privacy, security, dignity, and control over their personal information, including but not limited to their; communications, image and likeness, location, biometric, health, financial, genetic, and minor children's data(s) as well as browsing and purchasing history and all other sensitive personal information.

- Those who speak out against authoritarians in support of the equality and dignity of the working people, even risking being labeled domestic terrorists as our founding fathers were.

We oppose:

- The proliferation of "protest laws" that chill the civil rights of citizens by criminalizing or imposing unnecessary restrictions and penalties on persons engaged in political protests or expressive activities.
- Immigration policies that target DACA recipients or unnecessarily split up families, placing minor children at risk.
- Harassment of those engaged in the promotion or protection of human rights
- State collaboration with government agencies acting outside the bounds of the Constitution.

Human and Civil Rights Action Agenda:

- Include sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression as protected classes in the Montana Human Rights Act and in the Montana Hate Crimes Act.
- Comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to allow everyone to lead a productive, dignified life.
- Make affordable housing available without discrimination.
- Repeal Section 7, Article 13 of the Montana Constitution to provide an explicit right to marriage equality in Montana.
- Prevent human trafficking, provide support and treatment for its victims, and bring perpetrators to justice.
- Pass local nondiscrimination ordinances to prevent discrimination based on actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Require state and local law enforcement agencies in Montana to track and accurately report all hate crimes to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Pass federal legislation to prohibit discrimination against any student, especially because of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
- Require state and local law enforcement to implement proven, best-practice models of implicit bias training.
- Hold public health programs to the highest standard of gender-affirming care.
- Restrain and restructure Immigration and Customs Enforcement and US Customs and Border Protection, limiting its activity to US land borders and ports of entry without broad powers of search and seizure.
- Disband and investigate any element of Federal law enforcement that has been militarized and politicized beyond its legitimate purpose.

Hunting, Fishing, and Outdoor Recreation

We recognize that the opportunity for Montanans to enjoy our spectacular landscapes, clean waters, and abundant fish and wildlife is an integral part of our heritage, identity, lifestyle, and economy. We believe in public ownership of the fish, wildlife, streams, and rivers of our state and rely on our government to hold these resources in trust for the beneficial use of our citizens and future generations.

We support:

- The right to keep and bear arms provided in both the Montana and the United States Constitutions.
- Montanans' right to participate in fair chase hunting, fishing, trapping, and outdoor recreation on our public lands and waters, consistent with private property rights.
- Public hunting as an appropriate tool for managing game populations.
- Appropriate incentives to compensate landowners for the impacts of hunting and fishing, as well as the maintenance of wildlife habitat on private land.
- Montana's Stream Access Law and public access to rivers, lakes, and streams, including the public's right to access streams at public bridges and public rights-of-way.
- Federal ownership and management of federal public lands in Montana and agency budget levels sufficient to provide facilities and services needed for a growing population and a diversified economy.
- License fee levels adequate to fund the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks' proper management of the public's wildlife and fish and their habitat as public trust resources.
- Diversity in the interests and perspectives of members of commissions and boards charged with influencing public policy on natural resources and outdoor recreation.
- Science-based decision-making for managing fish and wildlife.
- An open and transparent public process when government entities at any level consider changes to existing status of our public lands and water.
- Science-based objectives and practices for establishing habitat conditions and land capacity for elk and other wildlife populations in order to maximize the public and economic benefits associated with hunting.
- Breakup up "land-locked" tracts of private land which fully surround public lands, whether by government coordination and purchase of easements or by government coordination of purchase of said private lands.
- The right of Montanans to access all of their public lands, including those in landscapes with checkerboard patterns of ownership.
- Science-based, non-lethal management practices for gray wolves that prioritize their ecological role as a native apex predator.

- Enacting hunting and fishing regulations that consider the interest of Montana residents first.
- Conserving key fish and wildlife habitat on public lands that support abundant wildlife populations, healthy coldwater fisheries and public recreational opportunities.

We oppose:

- Any net loss of publicly owned lands, including any proposal to sell off federal public lands or transfer authority of federal public lands to local or state governments.
- The private sale of wildlife or any tags or permits intended to authorize the harvest of wildlife by any source other than the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.
- The increasing trend toward privatization and commercialization of public fish and wildlife resources in Montana.
- Any reductions of or restrictions on existing public access to public lands and waters.
- The partial or total encapsulation of public land within parcels of private land, rendering access by the general public unreasonably difficult or functionally impossible.
- The legal misclassification of "corner crossing" as trespassing.
- Legislative mandates that override professional biological expertise to artificially reduce wolf populations through unethical harvesting methods or commercialized bounties.

Hunting, Fishing, and Outdoor Recreation Action Agenda:

- Resist the movement to transfer or sell federal lands to the states.
- Aggressively pursue research and development programs to eliminate chronic wasting disease, whirling disease, and other wildlife afflictions, as well as noxious weeds and invasive aquatic species.
- Pursue more robust funding for Montana State Parks in order to meet the increasing demand for outdoor recreation facilities and protect Montana's historic sites

International Relations

In the spirit of the late Senator Mike Mansfield, we believe that America should treat all nations and peoples with the same dignity and respect we expect of one another. We believe our greatest strength and our greatest security lie in our effective use of commerce, aid, diplomacy, and collaboration to improve the well-being and good will of all peoples and all nations.

We support:

- Democratic policies and collaborative approaches that lead to global stability; multilateral solutions to global problems; and nuclear, chemical, and biological disarmament.
- Policies that promote human and civil rights, including the right to political and economic self- determination, for all peoples of the world.
- Fair trade practices and the promotion of Montana products and services in the global marketplace.
- Foreign aid that emphasizes meeting basic human needs, rather than supplying military equipment.
- Abiding by our international treaties (especially the Geneva Conventions), combatting terrorism, and promoting peace while continually re-assessing our global military policy.
- Debt forgiveness for impoverished nations.
- Global environmental and energy initiatives that protect and encourage environmental health as a foundation for a sustainable world.
- Global food security and health initiatives that move our world toward a time when people no longer face the agony and injustice of extreme poverty, undernutrition, and hunger.
- Opening our doors as Montanans to an appropriate number of thoroughly vetted refugees and those seeking asylum.
- Vigilant monitoring and enforcement of all bilateral and multilateral trade agreements to which the United States is party.
- Working to restore and increase trust in the United States as a partner, on the part of our allies and the world community.
- Opening our doors as Montanans to refugees and those seeking asylum.

We oppose:

- Responses to terrorism that suspend or ignore the constitutional right of every United States citizen to be protected from warrantless surveillance, suspension of habeas corpus, indefinite detention without trial, and arbitrary deprivation of life without due process.
- Any normalization of trade relations with a country that engages in religious persecution, child labor, forced prison labor, environmental degradation, or prohibitions against the rights of workers to form unions.
- The inhumane separation and imprisonment of families at the border.
- Actions by federal, state, and local government agencies that violate the human rights, civil rights, or dignity of immigrants and law-abiding residents of Montana.
- Subjecting our brave service members and their families to the sacrifice of fighting endless wars.

- The efforts of authoritarians, foreign or domestic, to impede, thwart, or destroy democracy.

International Relations Action Agenda:

- Discontinue efforts to prevent persons seeking asylum from making lawful applications at ports of entry.
- End the failed embargo on Cuba, lift the restrictions on travel to Cuba by United States citizens, and normalize relations with Cuba.
- Request the re-evaluation of the Authorization for Use of Military Force enacted on 9/18/2001.
- Support policies that protect civil and human rights of immigrants.
- Support United States participation in an accountable and transparent World Health Organization.
- Continue to provide the Ukrainian people with humanitarian aid, strategic expertise, diplomatic support, and arms as they fight to maintain their independence as a nation.
- Provide people in need of humanitarian aid, strategic expertise, diplomatic support and arms with the resources they need to fight to maintain independence.
- End all alliances, international trade, foreign aid, and military support to countries committing acts of genocide or violating international law.

Jobs and the Economy

We know that it requires both government and private business to create the quality jobs necessary to sustain a healthy economy. Government at both federal and state levels is responsible for funding infrastructure, housing, education programs, and economically and environmentally sound growth policies that are major job creators and strengthen and diversify our private-sector economy.

We support:

- Increasing the number of jobs in Montana that provide ample wages and salaries, benefits, and a healthy, safe workplace.
- A comprehensive statewide infrastructure modernization program that creates good jobs while strengthening communities and producing a robust foundation for future economic growth, including critical water, sewer, transportation, housing and high-speed internet systems.
- Access to affordable capital for small businesses.
- Increased state investment in affordable, quality housing for all Montanans.
- Increasing state and federal funding to support highway and bridge improvements, public education, and university research that creates jobs in the private sector.
- Requiring the employment of Montana workers on projects funded with taxpayer dollars, including tax incentives.

- State and federal funding for development of science and technology centers of excellence, sharing facilities and faculty with Montana's universities and colleges.
- Efforts to attract diverse and innovative businesses to Montana, especially in rural Montana and Indian Country.
- The development of business/university partnerships and other collaborative efforts to assist existing businesses and attract quality employers.
- Fair trade agreements that improve the export value of Montana products, thus protecting Montana jobs.
- Promotion of Montana tourism and Montana-made goods and services in the global marketplace.
- Workforce training programs and Career Technical Education preparing our workers for dynamic, rapidly changing economies and enabling current and future generations of workers to find jobs that allow them to continue living in Montana.
- Net neutrality and the ability for all Montanans to access a free and open internet, which is essential to innovation and a competitive economy.
- The use of registered apprenticeships on public works projects.
- Policies recognizing that affordable, accessible housing, childcare, and medical and behavioral health are essential to a flourishing economy.
- Responsible technology and digital infrastructure development that creates good, dependable Montana jobs, protects local communities, sustains its own infrastructure cost, respects Montana's natural resources, changing climate, and strengthens the public systems our economy is reliant upon.
- Fair, transparent, and competitive markets in which Montanans can compare prices, make informed choices, and participate in commerce without being secretly profiled, manipulated, or charged variable prices based on surveillance of their personal information.
- The Right to Modify for all products and equipment.
- The Right to Repair for all products and equipment.
- Montanans' ability to import, register, and use vehicles from international markets without interference, so long as said vehicles meet state minimum standards for road legality.

We oppose:

- Any workplace culture that refuses to take action against sex harassment, sexual assault, sexual discrimination with respect to gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- Attempts to weaken environmental protection, construction standards, and fair housing protections.

Jobs and the Economy Action Agenda:

- Raise the minimum wage to a living wage standard so that Montanans are not forced to exist on inadequate wages or seek publicly funded assistance while employed.
- Continue AMTRAK passenger rail service along the Hi-Line and reintroduce passenger rail service through southern Montana.
- Ensure availability of low-rent housing and low-interest loans to help Montanans with low incomes acquire housing.
- Expand and enhance a statewide high-speed internet infrastructure that is both affordable and accessible to all.
- Continue or expand critical infrastructure programs such as State Revolving Loan Fund, Treasure State 24 Endowment Program, Community Development Block Grants, and Community Transportation Enhancement Program.
- Support the Build Montana initiative.
- Support universal paid sick leave and family leave.
- Ban surveillance pricing in Montana and prohibit businesses from using personal information or algorithmic profiles to manipulate individual prices, fees, or terms for goods and services.
- Reduce or repeal the federal 25-year ban on automotive imports.
- Support the passage of a National Infrastructure Bank Act to facilitate efficient investments and financing of infrastructure projects and new job creation.

Labor

We believe that stable jobs with livable salaries and wages are another cornerstone of a stable economy and a healthy society. Because the vast majority of Montanans make their living as wage-earners, we seek fair compensation for their labor so that they can provide for their families and sustain their communities. Montana workers deserve safety, security, and dignity as conditions of their employment, as well as conditions of their retirement after a lifetime of hard work.

We support:

- The right of workers to establish democracy in the workplace by forming or joining independent unions for the purpose of bargaining and advocating collectively.
- The right of workers to withhold their labor in the resolution of labor/management disputes.
- Fair and adequate compensation that allows Montana wage-earners to sustain themselves, their families, and their communities.
- Equal pay for equal work.
- Prevailing wage levels for workers on any project funded with taxpayer dollars.
- Family-friendly workplace practices, including paid family and medical leave and employer-assisted child and elder care programs.

- Strong protections against child labor and appropriate employment conditions for young adult workers.
- Safe and healthy workplaces with just compensation for job-related injuries and unemployment benefits when workers lose their jobs.
- Training programs that enable prisoners to obtain employment upon release.
- Congressional involvement in and approval of trade agreements and amendments to those agreements.
- Strengthening federal, state, and private programs to provide for and protect our seniors in retirement.
- Worker's right to know when automated systems are used to monitor or make decisions affecting their employment, and to contest any automated decision affecting their working conditions, compensation, or advancement.

We oppose:

- Privatizing employment in areas that belong in the public sector.
- "Right-to-work" in all of its forms, whether imposed by legislative, executive, or judicial action, as well as any other measure that restricts a worker's ability to join a strong union or allows workers to use benefits of a union without paying their fair share.
- The use of "permanent replacements" to undermine the right to strike.
- Discriminatory practices in hiring, promotions, working conditions, or compensation and the use of distinctions in employment that have no bearing on a worker's ability to fulfill the duties of a job.
- The practice of hiring part-time or leased employees in order to avoid or reduce payments for fringe benefits, including health insurance and retirement benefits.
- The use of prison labor to replace workers on jobs normally performed by public or private sector workers.
- Foreign trade agreements that disadvantage U.S. workers and allow corporations to offshore their operations in an effort to reduce corporate tax rates and circumvent federal safety, environmental, and labor regulations.
- Erosion of the labor rights of all employees.
- The misuse of H2B visas to import foreign workers who take jobs from qualified Montana workers.
- Efforts to skirt minimum wage and other employment standards, including tip credits and worker misclassification.
- Efforts to weaken, undermine, or repeal prevailing wage laws and their enforcement.

Labor Action Agenda:

- Raise the minimum wage to a living wage standard so that Montanans do not have to exist on inadequate wages or seek publicly funded assistance while employed.

- Employ union workers for Montana's reclamation and restoration projects, as well as workforce development initiatives.
- Using partnerships between government and labor, develop programs to train and retrain Montana workers for tomorrow's jobs.
- Eliminate the practice of worker misclassification in order to reduce compensation and benefits for employees.
- Enact a Montana contractor preference law that requires the hiring of qualified local workers on public works projects and/or on projects seeking tax credits as rebates or reductions.
- Remove the maximum wage limit to the OASDI Tax Rate.
- Strengthen Social Security and Medicare.
- Establish and/or protect defined benefit plans for both public and private pensions.
- Adhere to responsible bidding and contracting principles, especially best-value contracting principles, rather than lowest-bidder awards.
- Require all publicly funded projects to compensate workers at or above the prevailing wage.
- Protect workers' freedom to organize their workplaces and collectively bargain; hold employers accountable for violating labor law; and ensure workers can negotiate higher pay, better benefits, and safer working conditions.
- Repeal the Taft-Hartley Act.
- Prohibit the use of AI-powered or otherwise automated systems of worker punishment, or evaluation.
- Repeal Montana's current ban on project labor agreements for public works projects.
- Support skilled and trained legislation that ensures that workers in high-hazard facilities are highly skilled and trained employees that have completed or are registered in an apprenticeship program that provides the necessary training to ensure the work can be completed safely.
- Urge federal legislators to reestablish the independence and professionalism of America's excellent and efficient federal workforce by fully funding and modernizing federal agencies and departments, strengthening whistleblower protections, halting the privatization of the work of the federal government, permanently securing collective bargaining rights for our federal workforce through the passage of the Protect America's Workforce Act, putting an end to federal government shutdowns and Schedule F reclassifications, and by in-sourcing work that the federal government and federal entities, including NASA, have outsourced.

Public Education

We believe that public education not only acts as the primary catalyst for a strong economy, upward mobility, and the quality of life in Montana, but also fosters the lasting bonds of understanding, acceptance, and community that make Montana such a desirable

place to live. We are therefore committed to a continuum of high-quality, equitable public education opportunities with adequate state funding to develop the potential of every Montanan and of Montana itself.

We support:

- An adequately funded system of public schools, colleges, and universities that promote a higher quality of life for children, families and communities and that foster employment opportunities, a strong economy, and social justice.
- Local control of neighborhood and community schools accountable for meeting high, clear standards for quality, safety, and equity.
- PreK-12 and college programs that meet our constitutional commitment to preserve the cultural heritage of Montana's American Indians, as well as close the American Indian achievement gap.
- A public school curriculum that serves the full range of age groups, abilities, and disabilities in learners and responds to a broad range of learner gifts and interests.
- Standards, compensation, and benefits that attract and retain high-quality professionals in Montana's public education settings, from Early Head Start through adult education and from preschool through graduate school.
- Opportunities for lifelong learning, including online learning, that will keep America competitive in a global economy, help break the cycle of illiteracy, and enrich democracy.
- Preserving the varied options for affordable, accessible, high-quality public higher education in Montana.
- The role of tribal colleges in providing higher education services to both Indian and non- Indian students.
- State and federal funding for grants, loans, scholarships and other financial aid for students, as well as for the research and scholarship missions of our universities.
- High-quality early childhood education programs, including Head Start, that prepare young children to succeed in school and become better citizens.
- Evidence-based mental health programs in public schools, including in-person, virtual, and apps programming.
- Factual, comprehensive, age-appropriate, scientific sex education in middle school through high school.

We oppose:

- Any use of public funds for private education.
- Shifting the state's responsibility for funding public K-12 education to local taxpayers.
- Shifting the state's responsibility for funding higher education to Montana students.
- Programs or policies that increase or encourage unrealistic levels of student debt.

- Any reduction or elimination of accreditation standards for certified staff in public schools, including but not limited to counselors, librarians, superintendents, principals, or teachers of electives.

Public Education Action Agenda:

- Design and implement a school funding formula that keeps pace with inflationary costs, ensures state funding is equitable and sufficient to provide a quality education, and does not pass disproportionate cost of funding schools to local taxpayers.
- Provide funding to ensure competitive salaries and benefits for K-12 school and university employees.
- Invest in high-quality online learning and technology and the broadband capacity to support it.
- Invest in the research component of the university mission.
- Provide adequate, ongoing funding for the continued implementation of Indian Education for All.
- Increase state funding for non-beneficiary students and additional resources for all students who attend Montana's tribal colleges.
- Continue funding and provide due diligence in the use of funds for Closing the Achievement Gap for American Indian Students.
- Expand efforts to preserve American Indian languages.
- Establish a 50-50 student/state split on the cost of higher education and implement other measures to reduce students' higher education costs and indebtedness, such as loan forgiveness programs for public service and allowing students to refinance college loans.
- Continue to invest in programs promoting high school graduation in Montana.
- Provide robust funding for educating gifted and talented and special needs students.
- Support the clear, rigorous, and relevant standards embodied in Montana's College and Career Ready Standards.
- A statewide comprehensive infrastructure plan to address health and safety needs of schools and to correct out-of-date deficiencies and technology delivery needs.
- Provide resources for evidence-based mental health programs in public schools.
- State funding for public preschool programs for children ages three to five.
- Expand opportunities for career and technical education.
- Provide transition programs for students with special needs and those coming from foster care when they exit the public school system.
- Develop guidelines and an education playbook to prepare for pandemics and other disasters.
- Require all Montana public schools to ensure that every student has access to a qualified healthcare professional during the school day.

Stewardship of Our Natural Resources

The teeming bounty of Montana's natural resources and wild country has always been at the heart of our prosperity, our heritage, and our lifestyle as Montanans. With the planet in a state of climate emergency, our 21st-century challenge is to ensure that these resources not only contribute to the strong economy needed to sustain families and communities, but also provide the clean and healthful environment that is our constitutional right.

We support:

- Far-sighted, cost-effective public policy to protect our environment and steward our natural resources for good jobs now and a clean and healthful environment for future generations.
- Legal protections for the care of Montana's natural environment.
- The promotion of tourism as a thriving Montana industry centered on the beauty and abundance of our natural resources.
- Sufficient government oversight of Montana's industries to ensure the preservation of Montana's environment and sustain the health of Montana's lands, forests, wildlife, and streams.
- Collaboration among all levels of government, private property owners, stakeholder groups, and citizens to manage Montana's natural resources effectively.
- Citizen involvement at all levels in the environmental regulatory process.
- Local growth policies and land use planning that maintain open space; protect our rivers and streams; and maintain or enhance critical fish and wildlife habitat, reasonable population density, private forestry, family agriculture, and economically and environmentally sustainable, fire-wise communities.
- The protection, conservation and improvement of the quality and quantity of our ground and surface water.
- The protection and improvement of our air quality, considering all sources of degradation.
- Reclamation of environmentally disturbed areas and disposal of hazardous and toxic waste so as to ensure public health and safety, as well as environmental integrity.
- Forest management practices that ensure the ecological health of our forests and allow for the types of outdoor recreation that constitute an increasingly important part of our economy.
- Sustainable agricultural practices that protect rangelands, riparian areas and wetlands habitats; inhibit soil erosion; reduce dependency on hazardous chemicals; and maintain and enhance soil fertility.
- Planning for and protecting wetlands, wildlife corridors, and riparian areas as an integral part of land-use planning and protection of water resources and related habitats.

- Finding solutions to human-caused climate change and the devastating consequences that are already affecting our communities, state, nation, and planet.
- Protecting access to public lands and waters so that Montana's outdoor heritage can be enjoyed by all Montanans and future generations.
- In close collaboration with stakeholders, protecting and expanding designated wilderness areas.
- Instituting programs to aid Montana citizens and businesses as they confront the realities of climate change, including strategies for adaptation of practices and mitigation of impacts, in an effort to protect the health, well-being and livelihoods of our citizens in every walk of life.
- Science based management of forests, including the recognition of the ecological role of wildfire on the landscape.

We oppose:

- The sale, transfer, or marketing of Montana's water for use in other states.
- Privatization of public water systems.
- The transfer of – or transferring the management of – federal public land to state, county, or private control.
- The construction, expansion, and operation of hazardous tar sands and crude oil pipelines within Montana, including the Bridger Pipeline system, to safeguard our water infrastructure, family agricultural operations, and tribal sovereignty.
- The privatization and exploitation of water for luxury amenities not open to the public or consumptive use that harms Montanans to benefit corporate interests.
- The use of exempt wells that deprive Montanans and the environment of water resources that affect private property rights and fisheries.
- The substitution of science with politics in management decisions leading to privatization and profiteering of public sector jobs and public land, water, and wildlife.

Stewardship of Our Natural Resources Action Agenda:

- Develop standards and infrastructure for use and reuse of water.
- Require the coal bed methane industry to recharge as much water as possible into the aquifer from which it was removed.
- Prohibit the disposal in Montana of hazardous and toxic waste generated outside Montana, and improve the standards and practices of disposing such waste produced in Montana.
- Provide state and federal funding for research and development by public universities and affiliated private institutes in order to advance technologies for best practices in forestry, agriculture, extractive industries, and energy production.

- Require the total disclosure of the contents of potentially life-threatening fracking fluids; support notification of neighbors when a well has been contaminated; and fully fund state monitoring of land, air, and water resources affected by hydraulic fracturing.
- Eliminate the manufacture and use of plastic shopping bags.
- Require sufficient, well-enforced financial bonding of extraction companies to provide for thorough environmental remediation.
- Seek Congressional ratification of water rights compacts between Montana and Native nations.
- Require natural resource projects, both public and private, to consult with impacted and neighboring tribes in decisions.
- Continue to protect the Montana Wilderness Study Areas as de facto federal Wilderness until community-driven proposals are adopted by congress.
- Require all major industrial users to forecast and report on all anticipated water usage annually and projected discharge, including thermal and chemical information.
- Establish a new water use classification for data centers to protect existing private and tribal treaty water rights and all water resources.

Taxation

We seek progressive, broad-based, equitable taxes that reflect and enhance our changing economy, adequately supporting a full range of quality public services and public education. Republican rule has shifted property taxes that should be paid by the largest corporations onto the backs of average Montana homeowners, renters and small businesses. Republican rule has also distorted Montana's previously progressive income tax system to the advantage of the super-wealthy. Democrats will correct these Republican inequities in taxation.

We support:

- A fair and equitable property tax system that provides funding for necessary local government services, requires wealthy property owners to pay their fair share, and ensures everyday Montanans are not forced out of their homes as a result of property tax burdens.
- Public disclosure of how public funds are currently used, how proposed new taxes will be used to improve programs and services, and how proposed tax cuts will affect existing programs and services.
- Updating and equalizing Montana tax policy to reflect changes in our state's economy and mitigate regressive inequities among taxpayer income brackets and tax classifications.

- Moving all data center property - buildings, equipment and networking capability - from special Class 17 Data Center category to Class 13 Centrally Assessed category where all other networking and telecommunication equipment is classified.

We oppose:

- Preferential tax treatment for distinct special interests or corporations, including data centers, that undermines fair and equitable taxation and diminishes funding for necessary public services.
- Efforts to bust the Constitutional Coal Tax Trust or to lower that tax.
- A statewide general sales tax.
- Shifting corporate tax burden onto Montana citizens.

Taxation Action Agenda:

- Create an Oil and Gas Trust Fund.
- Create a fair property tax system that reduces residential taxes and increases taxes on corporations to equalize tax burdens.
- Close the tax loophole that enables data center tenants who own the computing and networking capability to take advantage of the business equipment tax exemption by using multiple small shell companies each owning small amounts of equipment that falls below the tax-exempt level thereby evading the business equipment taxes.

Transportation

We believe every Montana deserves access to safe, reliable, affordable, and connected transportation options. A modern multimodal transportation system is essential to public safety, economic opportunity, rural vitality, and quality of life. We support investments that strengthen connections across Montana, close gaps in service between rural and urban communities, sustain essential air service through dedicated state matching and federal funds, restore passenger rail to Southern Montana, and ensure efficient movement of people and goods statewide.

We support:

- Amtrak's Empire Builder service along Montana's Hi-Line.
- Restoration of long-distance passenger rail service across Montana's southern route.
- Strong state participation in the federal Corridor Identification and Development Program.
- Full federal funding and protection of the Essential Air Service (EAS) program, which provides scheduled general and commercial air service to Butte, Glasgow, Glendive, Havre, Sidney, Wolf Point, Kalispell, and West Yellowstone.
- Medical flight operations that connect rural Montanans to regional medical

centers, recognizing that reliable aviation infrastructure is a critical lifeline for emergency and specialty care across rural Montana.
- Expanded mobility and accessibility for all that incorporates public transit systems in both urban and rural Montana by using regional mobility partnerships.

We oppose:
- Cuts to Federal and State funding which connect rural, urban and tribal communities

Transportation Action Agenda:
- Pursue federal and state funding that maintains, expands and modernizes our multimodal transportation infrastructure.

Veterans and Active Military

We ask Americans in the military to risk their lives and disrupt their families' lives to serve our country. In gratitude for their sacrifice, Montana Democrats regard as sacred our obligation to care for America's military – during active duty and for the rest of their lives. This means championing proactive, effective healthcare and seeking tax, housing, and workforce assistance that ensure veterans can afford to live and thrive in our state.

We support:
- Timely and effective medical, educational, and social services that meet the needs of Montana's active military and their families.
- Timely and effective services to ensure that Montana service members, including members of the National Guard and Reserve, have a successful readjustment when they return to their families, communities, and workplaces.
- Funding and resources for a wide array of services to ensure that Montana's veterans have timely and effective access to healthcare, especially mental health care; disability compensation; housing; and meaningful employment, job training, and/or small business assistance.
- Higher education practices and policies that address the financial, psychological, social, and academic challenges of Montana's active military, as well as Montana's veterans.

We oppose:
- Privatization of any veterans' health services, facilities, or hospitals in Montana

Veterans and Active Military Action Agenda:

- Maximize coordination between Federal veterans' services and the State of Montana.
- Provide funding for the development, construction, and continued support of veterans' facilities and associated infrastructure across the state.
- Encourage integration of returning veterans into the rural economy by providing training and financial support.
- Continue federal programs supporting state and local groups that help veterans who are homeless find employment.
- Implement programs that bring more accountability and transparency to Veterans Affairs, enhance benefits and care to more veterans and their families, and fund the VA sufficiently to ensure all veterans have affordable and timely access to care.
- Move with urgency to adopt a comprehensive program addressing the suicides of active duty and veteran Montanans.
- Honor our compact with those who serve or have served by enacting legislation to improve health care and benefits for veterans suffering injuries from toxic exposure during their military service.

Women

As Montana Democratic women, we are committed to securing equal opportunities in education, employment, and leadership, an unencumbered Constitutional right for every woman to vote, and an independent ability to make personal healthcare decisions, thus ensuring safe, healthy and nurturing environments for all women. We support women's autonomy and their equitable role, not only in determining local, state and national policies, but also in making decisions to meet their own needs and communities.

We support:

- Swift, unbiased, and fair grievance procedures, as well as protections against retaliation, for all victims of sexual assault, abuse, and harassment and for the whistleblowers on these crimes.
- The equal application to women of the inalienable rights delineated in the constitutions of our state and nation.
- A woman's right and ability to make personal decisions regarding contraception and reproductive health, including fertility treatment, as well as the right to provide or receive services related to those choices in a safe, accessible environment.
- Funding for reproductive and family planning education and STI/AIDS prevention.
- Active recruitment of women for leadership roles in public office and in the Democratic Party.
- Equal access for women of all ages to training, jobs, and promotions and efforts to ensure equal pay for equal work.

- Programs and services to address the unique needs of women as primary caregivers for children and the elderly in regard to health care, housing, child support, childcare, job training, education and other public benefits.
- Efforts to address and end violence against women -- including domestic violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking, bullying, stalking, and sexual harassment -- through education, early and ongoing intervention, and funding for direct services.
- Paid family leave.
- Adequate funding for victim advocate programs in every community.
- The rights and recognition of transgender women as women and transgender men as men.

We oppose:

- Efforts to restrict or eliminate a woman's right to make decisions about reproduction and childbirth or to restrict access to services related to such decisions.
- Using public funds to support crisis pregnancy centers engaging in deceptive practices or disseminating false and misleading medical information.

Women's Action Agenda:

- Continue to pursue equal pay for equal work.
- Enact the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution.