

Are You a Republican?

Core Principles from the 2008 Republican Party Platform

Core Principles from the 2008 Republican Party Platform (<http://www.gop.com/2008Platform/>)

From the Preamble to the Platform: A platform in enduring principle based on ideals to unify our country, devoted to the inherent dignity and rights of every person and dedicated to a rule of law protecting and preserving liberty.

This is a platform of enduring principle, not passing convenience -- the product of the most open and transparent process in American political history. We offer it to our fellow Americans in the assurance that our Republican ideals are those that unify our country: Courage in the face of foreign foes. An optimistic patriotism, driven by a passion for freedom. Devotion to the inherent dignity and rights of every person. Faith in the virtues of self-reliance, civic commitment, and concern for one another. Distrust of government's interference in people's lives. Dedication to a rule of law that both protects and preserves liberty. (Preamble, p. 1.)

Republicans Believe Our First Obligation is Defending our Nation by Preserving all Defense Options

All Americans should affirm that our first obligation is the security of our country. (P. 1)

In dealing with present conflicts and future crises, our next president must preserve all options. It would be presumptuous to specify them in advance and foolhardy to rule out any action deemed necessary for our security.

Republicans Believe National and Theater Missile Defenses Must Be Deployed to Protect the Nation

We must develop and deploy both national and theater missile defenses to protect the American homeland, our people, our Armed Forces abroad, and our allies. Effective, layered missile defenses are critical to guard against the unpredictable actions of rogue regimes and outlaw states, reduce the possibility of strategic blackmail, and avoid the disastrous consequences of an accidental or unauthorized launch by a foreign power. (P. 2)

Republicans Believe Our National Borders Must Be Secured

Our determination to uphold the rule of law begins with more effective enforcement, giving our agents the tools and resources they need to protect our sovereignty, completing the border fence quickly and securing the borders, and employing complementary strategies to secure our ports of entry. Experience shows that enforcement of existing laws is effective in reducing and reversing illegal immigration. (P. 3.)

Our determination to uphold the rule of law begins with . . . completing the border fence quickly and securing the borders, and employing complementary strategies to secure our ports of entry. (P. 3.)

The rule of law means . . . enforcing the law against those who overstay their visas, rather than letting millions flout the generosity that gave them temporary entry. (P. 3.)

It does not mean driver's licenses for illegal aliens, nor does it mean that states should be allowed to flout the federal law barring them from giving in-state tuition rates to illegal aliens, nor does it mean that

illegal aliens should receive social security benefits, or other public benefits, except as provided by federal law. (P. 3.)

We oppose amnesty. (P. 3.)

We support English as the official language of our nation, while welcoming the ethnic diversity in the United States and the territories, including language. (P. 4.)

Republicans Believe We Must Increase the Size of Armed Forces

We must significantly increase the size of our Armed Forces; crucial to that goal will be retention of combat veterans. (P. 4.)

Republicans Believe U.S. Armed Forces Must Remain Under U.S. Command

As a matter of U.S. sovereignty, American forces must remain under American command. (P. 7.)

Republicans Abhor Federal Funding Of Abortions Anywhere

We strongly support the long-held policy of the Republican Party known as the .Mexico City policy, which prohibits federal monies from being given to non-governmental organizations that provide abortions or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in other countries. We reject any treaty or agreement that would violate those values. (Pp. 7-8.)

Republicans Reject the Jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court over Americans

To shield the members of our Armed Forces and others in service to America from ideological prosecutions, the Republican Party does not accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court over Americans. (P. 8.)

Republicans Support A Free and Secure Israel

Israel is a vigorous democracy, unique in the Middle East. We reaffirm America's commitment to Israel's security and will ensure that Israel maintains a qualitative edge in military technology over any potential adversaries. Israel must have secure, defensible borders and we support its right to exist as a Jewish state able to defend itself against homicide bombings, rocket and mortar fire, and other attacks against its people. (P. 12.)

Republicans Support Enforcing Constitutional Safeguards

Republicans will uphold and defend our party's core principles: Constrain the federal government to its legitimate constitutional functions. (P. 15.)

Republicans Support Only Constitutionally Necessary Federal Spending

Spend only what is necessary, and tax only to raise revenue for essential government functions. (P. 15.)

Republicans Reject Unconstitutional, Wasteful Pork-Barrel Special Interest Spending

The other party wants to continue pork barrel politics; we are disgusted by it, no matter who practices

it. The other party wants to ignore fiscal problems while squandering billions on ineffective programs; we are determined to end that waste. The entrenched culture of official Washington – an intrusive tax-and-spend liberalism -- remains a formidable foe, but we will confront and ultimately defeat it. (P. 15.)

Republicans Will Stop Unconstitutional Special Interest Earmark Spending

Earmarking must stop. To eliminate wasteful projects and pay-offs to special interests, we will impose an immediate moratorium on the earmarking system and reform the appropriations process through full transparency. Tax dollars must be distributed on the basis of clear national priorities, not a politician's seniority or party position. (P. 16.)

Republicans Believe "It's Your Money, Taxpayers"

The most important distinction between Republicans and the leadership of today's Democratic Party concerning taxes is not just that we believe you should keep more of what you earn. That's true, but there is a more fundamental distinction. It concerns the purpose of taxation. We believe government should tax only to raise money for its essential functions. (P. 23.)

Republicans Oppose Using the Tax Code for Social Engineering

The Republican Party will put a stop to both social engineering and corporate handouts by simplifying tax policy, eliminating special deals, and putting those saved dollars back into the taxpayers' pockets. (P. 23.)

Republicans Support Reducing Corporate Tax Rates

We support a major reduction in the corporate tax rate so that American companies stay competitive with their foreign counterparts and American jobs can remain in this country. (P. 23.)

Republicans Know We Cannot Tax and Spend Our Way to Prosperity

The last thing Americans need right now is tax hikes. On the federal level, Republicans lowered taxes in 2001 and 2003 in order to encourage economic growth, put more money in the pockets of every taxpayer, and make the system fairer. It worked. If Congress had then controlled its spending, we could have done even more. (P. 25.)

Republicans Support Secret Ballots for Workers

We oppose card check legislation, which deprives workers of their privacy and their right to vote, because it exposes workers to intimidation by union organizers. (P. 28.)

Republicans Will Not Infringe the Right of the People to Keep and Bear Arms

We uphold the right of individual Americans to own firearms, a right which antedated the Constitution and was solemnly confirmed by the Second Amendment. We applaud the Supreme Court's decision in *Heller* affirming that right, and we assert the individual responsibility to safely use and store firearms. We call on the next president to appoint judges who will similarly respect the Constitution. Gun ownership is responsible citizenship, enabling Americans to defend themselves, their property, and communities. (P. 51.)

Republicans Believe in the Sanctity and Dignity of All Human Life

Faithful to the first guarantee of the Declaration of Independence, we assert the inherent dignity and sanctity of all human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution, and we endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children. We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortion and will not fund organizations which advocate it. We support the appointment of judges who respect traditional family values and the sanctity and dignity of innocent human life. (P. 52.)

Republicans Believe Marriage Means A Union of a Man and a Woman

Because our children's future is best preserved within the traditional understanding of marriage, we call for a constitutional amendment that fully protects marriage as a union of a man and a woman, so that judges cannot make other arrangements equivalent to it. In the absence of a national amendment, we support the right of the people of the various states to affirm traditional marriage through state initiatives. (P. 53.)

Republicans Support the Right of the People to Freely Exercise their Religion

Our Constitution guarantees the free exercise of religion and forbids any religious test for public office, and it likewise prohibits the establishment of a state-sponsored creed. The balance between those two ideals has been distorted by judicial rulings which attempt to drive faith out of the public arena. The public display of the Ten Commandments does not violate the U.S. Constitution and accurately reflects the Judeo-Christian heritage of our country. We support the right of students to engage in student-initiated, student-led prayer in public schools, athletic events, and graduation ceremonies, when done in conformity with constitutional standards. (Pp. 53-54.)

Now, for the Democrat Party Platform.

Core "Principles" of 2008 Democrat Party Platform
(<http://www.democrats.org/a/party/platform.html>)

Democrats Believe in Blaming America First For Terrorism

After September 11, we could have built the foundation for a new American century, but instead we instigated an unnecessary war in Iraq before finishing a necessary war in Afghanistan. (Preamble, p. 5.)

Democrats Use Weasel Words to Mask Their True Intentions, Like Calling Taxes on the American People "Investments", And Believe Taxes Somehow Generate Jobs

We will invest in America again – in world-class public education, in our infrastructure, and in green technology – so that our economy can generate the good, high-paying jobs of the future. (Preamble, p. 6.)

Democrats Believe Money Grows on Trees and the Solution to Every Problem is to Spend the Taxpayer's Money

We will provide an immediate energy rebate to American families struggling with the record price of gasoline and the skyrocketing cost of other necessities – to spend on those basic needs and energy efficient measures. We will devote \$50 billion to jumpstarting the economy, helping economic growth, and preventing another one million jobs from being lost. This will include assistance to states and localities to prevent them from having to cut their vital services like education, health care, and infrastructure. (Pp. 8-9.)

Democrats Routinely Ignore the Fact that the Constitution Limits Congressional Authority to the Enumerated Powers Set Forth in Article I, Section 8

Health care should be a shared responsibility between employers, workers, insurers, providers and government. All Americans should have coverage they can afford; employers should have incentives to provide coverage to their workers; insurers and providers should ensure high quality affordable care; and the government should ensure that health insurance is affordable and provides meaningful coverage. (P. 10.)

Democrats Hide Their Socialistic Policies By Using Weasel Words Like “We” and “Public” for “Government”

We will make it a priority to secure for hardworking families the part of the American Dream that includes a secure and healthy retirement. Individuals, employers, and government must all play a role. We will adopt measures to preserve and protect existing public and private pension plans. In the 21st century, Americans also need better ways to save for retirement. We will automatically enroll every worker in a workplace pension plan that can be carried from job to job and we will match savings for working families who need the help. (P. 13.)

Democrats Believe Some Unnamed Someone Should Somehow Magically Create Jobs For Everyone

In the platform hearings, Americans expressed dismay that people who are willing to study and work cannot get a job that pays enough to live on in the current economy. Democrats are committed to an economic policy that produces good jobs with good pay and benefits. That is why we support the right to organize. We know that when unions are allowed to do their job of making sure that workers get their fair share, they pull people out of poverty and create a stronger middle class. (P. 14.)

Democrats Believe They Should Hide Their Plan to Outlaw Secret Ballots by Calling it the “Employee Free Choice Act”

We will strengthen the ability of workers to organize unions and fight to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. (P. 14.)

Democrats Believe in Building Upon Over Forty Years of Failed Federal “War on Poverty” Programs with – Drum Roll, Please – More of the Same

Working together, we can cut poverty in half within ten years. We will provide all our children a world-class education, from early childhood through college. We will develop innovative transitional job programs that place unemployed people into temporary jobs and train them for permanent ones. To help workers share in our country’s productivity, we’ll expand the Earned Income Tax Credit, and raise the minimum wage and index it to inflation. The majority of adults in poverty are women, and to combat poverty we must work for fair pay, support for mothers, and policies that promote responsible fatherhood. (P. 15.)

Democrats Believe Higher Taxes (Er, “Investments”) Will Lower Gas Prices

And this is how we'll solve the problem of four-dollar-a-gallon gas — with a comprehensive plan and investment in clean energy. (P. 18.)

Democrats Believe The Federal Government Should Be The National Babysitter, Despite No Constitutional Power Exists for that Role

We will make quality, affordable early childhood care and education available to every American child from the day he or she is born. Our Children's First Agenda, including increases in Head Start and Early Head Start, and investments in high-quality Pre-K, will improve quality and provide learning and support to families with children ages zero to five. Our Presidential Early Learning Council will coordinate these efforts. (P. 19.)

Democrats Believe Taking Money Out of the Economy By Taxes ("Investments") And Spending It on Vague Federal "Programs" and "Partnerships" Will Somehow "Grow" the Economy they just Weakened Through the Taxes and the Wasteful, Inefficient "Programs" and "Partnerships"

We will invest in American jobs and finally end the tax breaks that ship jobs overseas. We will create an Advanced Manufacturing Fund to provide for our next generation of innovators and job creators; we will expand the Manufacturing Extension Partnerships and create new job training programs for clean technologies. We will bring together government, private industry, workers, and academia to turn around the manufacturing sector of the U.S. economy and provide assistance to automakers and parts companies to encourage retooling of facilities in this country to produce advanced technology vehicles and their key components. (Pp. 21-22.)

Democrats Envy Those Who Succeed and Demand to "Steward" Their Prosperity By Using the Tax Code to Take Money from "Rich" Peter and Give it to "Poor" Paul Who Pays No Taxes

We will shut down the corporate loopholes and tax havens and use the money so that we can provide an immediate middle-class tax cut that will offer relief to workers and their families. We'll eliminate federal income taxes for millions of retirees, because all seniors deserve to live out their lives with dignity and respect. We will not increase taxes on any family earning under \$250,000 and we will offer additional tax cuts for middle class families. For families making more than \$250,000, we'll ask them to give back a portion of the Bush tax cuts to invest in health care and other key priorities. (P. 24.)

Democrats Believe in a Fairy-Tale World Having No Nuclear Weapons – Including Ours

America will seek a world with no nuclear weapons and take concrete actions to move in this direction. (P. 31.)

We will make the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons worldwide a central element of U.S. nuclear weapons policy. (P. 31.)

Democrats Believe In Risking the Safety of all Americans by Not Developing New Nuclear Deterrents Nor Testing Any of Our Nuclear Deterrent Weapons

We will not develop new nuclear weapons, and will work to create a bipartisan consensus to support ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which will strengthen the NPT and aid international monitoring of nuclear activities. (P. 32.)

Democrats Claim To Want to Expand Our Armed Forces, But Then Cut Their Budgets and Weapons Programs

We will use this moment both to rebuild our military and to prepare it for the missions of the future. (P. 33.)

Democrats Believe Our Military Should Be Used For Non-Defense “International Social Work”

We believe we must also be willing to consider using military force in circumstances beyond self-defense in order to provide for the common security that underpins global stability – to support friends, participate in stability and reconstruction operations, or confront mass atrocities. (P. 33.)

Democrats Believe The Success of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Program Should Be Ignored And Replaced With A System Allowing Individual Soldiers To Force Their Sexual Preferences Openly On Their Fellow Soldiers

We support the repeal of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” and the implementation of policies to allow qualified men and women to serve openly regardless of sexual orientation. (P. 36.)

Democrats Believe in a “Blame America First” Policy in International Security Arrangements With Our Allies

Too often, in recent years, we have sent the opposite signal to our international partners. In the case of Europe, we dismissed European reservations about the wisdom and necessity of the Iraq war and their concerns about climate change. In Asia, we belittled South Korean efforts to improve relations with the North. In Latin America, from Mexico to Argentina, we failed to address concerns about immigration and equity and economic growth. In Africa, we have allowed genocide to persist for over five years in Darfur and have not done nearly enough to answer the United Nation’s call for more support to stop the killing. Under Barack Obama, we will rebuild our ties to our allies in Europe and Asia and strengthen our partnerships throughout the Americas and Africa. (P. 36.)

Democrats Believe Man is Changing the Climate of the Globe, Despite No Evidence for that Conclusion

We will lead to defeat the epochal, man-made threat to the planet: climate change. Without dramatic changes, rising sea levels will flood coastal regions around the world. Warmer temperatures and declining rainfall will reduce crop yields, increasing conflict, famine, disease, and poverty. By 2050, famine could displace more than 250 million people worldwide. That means increased instability in some of the most volatile parts of the world. (P. 43.)

Democrats Believe “Service” to Our Country Means Only “Government-Paid Service”

The future of our country will be determined not only by our government and our policies but through the efforts of the American people. That is why we will ask all Americans to be actively involved in meeting the challenges of the new century. In this young century, our military has answered the call to serve, even as that call has come too often. We must now make it possible for all citizens to serve. We will expand AmeriCorps, double the size of the Peace Corps, enable more to serve in the military, create new opportunities for international service, integrate service into primary education, and create new opportunities for experienced and retired persons to serve. And if you invest in America, America will invest in you: we will increase support for service-learning, establish tax incentives for college students who serve, and create scholarships for students who pledge to become teachers. (P. 44.)

Democrats Use A Mythical Imminent “Climate Change Catastrophe” as a Reason For More Taxes and

Regulations to Hobble Our Economy

Despite the efforts of our current Administration to deny the science of climate change and the need to act, we still believe that America can be earth's best hope. We will implement a market-based cap and trade system to reduce carbon emissions by the amount scientists say is necessary to avoid catastrophic change and we will set interim targets along the way to ensure that we meet our goal. We will invest in advanced energy technologies, to build the clean energy economy and create millions of new, good "Green Collar" American jobs. (Pp. 46-47.)

Democrats Believe In Preventing Nuclear Power By Preventing Safe Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel Rods

We will protect Nevada and its communities from the high-level nuclear waste dump at Yucca Mountain, which has not been proven to be safe by sound science. (P. 47.)

Democrats Believe Taking Money Out of the Economy to Spend on "Investments" In Government – Favored Wasteful "Programs" and "Public-Private Partnerships" Will Somehow Have a Positive Effect on the Economy Rather than Less Regulation and Lower Taxes

To help regional business development we will double federal funding for basic research, expand the deployment of broadband technology, increase access to capital for businesses in underserved areas, create a national network of public-private business incubators, and provide grants to support regional innovation clusters. Since businesses can only function when workers can get to their place of employment, we will invest in public transportation including rail, expand transportation options for low-income communities, and strengthen core infrastructure like our roads and bridges. (P. 48.)

Democrats Believe Disarmed Citizens Are Safe From Armed Criminals and Gun Control In Chicago, the "Murder Capital of America," Has Made Chicagoans Safer And the Discredited and Failed "Assault Weapons Ban" Should Be Reinstated To Disarm Law-Abiding Americans

We believe that the right to own firearms is subject to reasonable regulation, but we know that what works in Chicago may not work in Cheyenne. We can work together to enact and enforce commonsense laws and improvements – like closing the gun show loophole, improving our background check system, and reinstating the assault weapons ban, so that guns do not fall into the hands of terrorists or criminals. (P. 48.)

Democrats Believe Women Have the Right to Kill Unborn Children

The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports Roe v. Wade and a woman's right to choose a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay, and we oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right. (P. 50.)

Democrats Believe the Government Should Control Elections and Candidates and Prevent Americans from Exercising their Freedom to Spend "Too Much" on the Candidates of their own Choosing

We support campaign finance reform to reduce the influence of moneyed special interests, including public financing of campaigns combined with free television and radio time. (P. 54.)

Democrats Believe Americans Involved in Terrorism Should Not Be Wiretapped No Matter Where They Live – Really!

We reject illegal wiretapping of American citizens, wherever they live. (P. 54.)

Democrats Believe The Federal Government Can Somehow Magically Fix Bad State Economies Caused by Imprudent "Tax and Spend" Policies By Democrat Governors and Legislatures Through More Federal Deficit Spending To Throw Money To Those Badly Governed States

Given the economic crisis across the country, states, and territories today face serious difficulties. More than half of our states face a combined billions of dollars in shortfalls. As a result, states have had to innovate and take matters into their own hands—and they have done an extraordinary job. Yet they should not have to do it alone. We will provide significant and immediate temporary funding to state and local governments, as well as territories and tribes. (P. 56.)

Democrats Believe They Are Smarter Than the Framers of the Constitution Regarding the District of Columbia and Congressional Representation

Our civil rights leaders and many Americans of every background have sacrificed too much for us to tolerate continuing denial to the nearly 600,000 residents of our nation's capital of the benefits of full citizenship, especially the vote, that are accorded to citizens of every state. We support equal rights to democratic self-government and congressional representation for the citizens of our nation's capital. (P. 56.)