

# **Green Party of the United States**



As adopted at the National Nominating Convention

Milwaukee, Wisconsin – June, 2004

## About the Green Party

The Green Party of the United States is a federation of state Green Parties. Committed to environmentalism, non-violence, social justice and grassroots organizing, Greens are renewing democracy without the support of corporate donors. Greens provide real solutions for real problems. Whether the issue is universal health care, corporate globalization, alternative energy, election reform or decent, living wages for workers, Greens have the courage and independence necessary to take on the powerful corporate interests. The Federal Elections Commission recognizes the Green Party of the United States as the official Green Party National Committee. We are partners with the European Federation of Green Parties and the Federation of Green Parties of the Americas.

The Green Party of the United States was formed in 2001 as a reincarnation of the older Association of State Green Parties (1996-2001). Our initial goal was to help existing state parties grow and to promote the formation of parties in all 51 states and colonies. Helping state parties is still our primary goal. As the Green Party National Committee we will devote our attention to establishing a national Green presence in politics and policy debate while continuing to facilitate party growth and action at the state and local level.

Green Party growth has been rapid since our founding in 2001 and Green candidates are winning elections throughout the U.S. State party membership has more than doubled since our founding and culminated in the 2000 Presidential Nominating Convention in Denver, CO where we nominated Ralph Nader and Winona LaDuke for our Presidential ticket.

For the 2004 presidential election we have nominated David Cobb and Pat LaMarche.

We are grassroots activists, environmentalists, advocates for social justice, nonviolent resisters and regular citizens who've had enough of corporate-dominated politics

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# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
A Call to Action .....	3
Platform Preamble .....	3
<b>10 KEY VALUES</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>I. DEMOCRACY</b> .....	<b>7</b>
A. Political Reform .....	8
B. Political Participation .....	9
C. Community .....	10
D. Foreign Policy .....	11
1. Foreign Policy – Peace and Disarmament .....	11
2. A Real Road to Peace in the Middle East .....	12
3. Foreign Policy – Trade .....	14
E. Domestic Security .....	15
F. Demilitarization and Exploration of Space .....	15
<b>II. SOCIAL JUSTICE</b> .....	<b>17</b>
A. Civil Rights and Equal Rights .....	18
1. Women's Rights .....	18
2. Racial Discrimination .....	20
3. Indigenous Peoples .....	20
4. Justice for Native Hawaiians: Kanaka Maoli .....	21
5. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity .....	21
6. Rights of the Disabled .....	22
7. Religious Freedom and Secular Equality .....	22
8. Youth Rights .....	23
9. Veterans' Rights .....	23
10. Consumer Protection .....	24
11. War on Terrorism .....	25
B. Environmental Justice .....	25
C. Economic Justice/Social Safety Net .....	26
D. Welfare: A Commitment to Ending Poverty .....	26
E. Education and the Arts .....	27
1. Education .....	27
2. The Arts .....	29
F. Health Care .....	30
1. Universal Health Care .....	31
2. AIDS/HIV .....	32
G. Labor .....	33
H. Criminal Justice .....	34
I. Population .....	36
J. Free Speech and Media Reform .....	37
K. Immigration/Emigration .....	38
L. Housing and Homelessness .....	39

<b>III. ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY .....</b>	<b>41</b>
A. Energy .....	42
B. Nuclear Issues .....	43
C. Transportation .....	44
D. Waste Management .....	45
E. Clean Air / Greenhouse Effect / Ozone Depletion .....	47
F. Land Use and Sustainable Cities .....	48
1. Land Ownership and Property Rights .....	48
2. Urban Land Use .....	48
3. Natural Resource Management .....	49
G. Water .....	50
H. Agriculture .....	52
I. Biological Diversity .....	53
J. Ethical Treatment of Animals .....	54
K. Forestry Practices .....	55
L. Ocean Protection .....	56
<b>IV. ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY .....</b>	<b>57</b>
A. Ecological Economics .....	58
B. Measuring Economic Progress – Economic Growth and the Steady-State Economy .....	59
C. Citizen Control Over Corporations .....	60
D. Livable Income .....	61
E. True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness .....	61
1. True Cost Pricing .....	62
2. Fair Taxation .....	62
F. Community Economic Involvement .....	63
G. Small Business and the Self-Employed .....	64
H. Work and Job Creation .....	65
I. Banking and Insurance Reform .....	66
J. Pension Reform .....	67
K. Anti-trust Enforcement .....	67
L. Advanced Technology and Defense Conversion .....	68
M. National Debt .....	70
<b>Index .....</b>	<b>71</b>

# INTRODUCTION

## A Call to Action

The **Green Platform** presents an eco-social analysis and vision for our country. In contrast to the way in which major political parties create their platforms, through the back-room deals of insiders and power-brokers, we have created a grassroots process that invites submissions from every local Green Party and every Green individual. Through democratic process over a year and a half, we arrive at a final draft to present to our national convention for approval. The **Green Platform** is an evolving document, a living work-in-progress that expresses our commitment to creating wise and enduring change in specific policies and in the political process itself. The Green Party is committed to values-based politics, as expressed in our **Ten Key Values**. These values guide us in countering and changing a system that extols exploitation, unsustainable consumption, and destructive competition.

## Platform Preamble

Never has our country faced as many challenges and crises as we do in 2004 and the near future. Levels of federal revenue are the lowest they have been since 1950 because of tax cuts and breaks for the very rich and for corporations. Government agencies charged with safeguarding public health and safety are operating with slashed budgets that paralyze their efforts. Jobs are being permanently relocated outside the country, while social and educational programs are being gutted. Our food, water, air, and soil are increasingly found to bear toxins and debilitating pollution. Every single level of government — local, county, state, and federal — is operating in the red, running up crushing amounts of debt. Many of our allies and former friends around the world are disgusted with our imperial foreign policy, militarism, and arrogant corporate behavior. Realizing that our actions will be judged by future generations, we ask how we can draw on the best of our traditions, calling forth a spirit of ingenuity and citizen participation to achieve a free, democratic, just, and responsible society, one that actively responds to the crucial ecological challenges of our time, rather than denying them.

We submit a bold vision of our country's future, a **Platform** on which we stand:

- Ⓔ Our **Ten Key Values** as a guide to a **politics of vision and action**,
- Ⓔ A creative, pragmatic plan for a **prospering sustainable economy**, and
- Ⓔ A call to restore and protect a **healthy, diverse environment** and to cultivate a sense of **community** at all levels, from the local to the planetary.

We propose a vision of our common good that is advanced through an **independent politics** free from the control of corporations and big money, and through a democratic structure and process that empowers and reaches across lines of division to bring together our combined strengths as a people.

We, the **Green Party**, see our political and economic progress, and our individual lives, within the context of an evolving, dynamic world.

As in nature, where adaptation and diversity provide key strategies through which life flourishes, a successful political strategy is one that is diverse, adaptable to changing needs, and strong and resilient in its core values:

- Ⓔ **Participatory Democracy**, rooted in community practice at the grassroots level and informing every level, from the local to the international.
- Ⓔ **Social Justice and Equal Opportunity** emphasizing personal and social responsibility, accountability, and an informing ethic of **Nonviolence**.
- Ⓔ **Ecological and Economic Sustainability**, balancing the interests of a regulated market economy and community-based economics with effective care for the Great Economy in which we are embedded: the ecosystems of the Earth.

The **Green Party Platform** seeks to identify the most crucial problems facing our country and offers ideas for responsible action to solve them. Looking to the future with hope and optimism, we believe we can truly correct the course of reckless, destructive governance that has allowed and encouraged the degradation of our ecological life-support systems, gutted our economy, and strained the social fabric to the point of causing material hardship for millions of Americans. Our common destiny brings us together across our nation and around the globe. We act in service to our children and the future generations of all our relations in the Earth community. We act in service to the future we are creating today.

# 10 KEY VALUES

## 1. GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY

Every human being deserves a say in the decisions that affect his or her life and should not be subject to the will of another. Therefore, we will work to increase public participation at every level of government and to ensure that our public representatives are fully accountable to the people who elect them. We will also work to create new types of political organizations which expand the process of participatory democracy by directly including citizens in the decision-making process.

## 2. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

All persons should have the rights and opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. We must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society at large, barriers such as racism and class oppression, sexism and homophobia, ageism and disability, which act to deny fair treatment and equal justice under the law.

## 3. ECOLOGICAL WISDOM

Human societies must operate with the understanding that we are part of nature, not separate from nature.

We must maintain an ecological balance and live within the ecological and resource limits of our communities and our planet. We support a sustainable society which utilizes resources in such a way that future generations will benefit and not suffer from the practices of our generation. To this end we must practice agriculture which replenishes the soil; move to an energy efficient economy; and live in ways that respect the integrity of natural systems.

## 4. NON-VIOLENCE

It is essential that we develop effective alternatives to society's current patterns of violence. We will work to demilitarize, and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, without being naive about the intentions of other governments.

We recognize the need for self-defense and the defense of others who are in helpless situations. We promote non-violent methods to oppose practices and policies with which we disagree, and will guide our actions toward lasting personal, community and global peace.

## 5. DECENTRALIZATION

Centralization of wealth and power contributes to social and economic injustice, environmental destruction, and militarization. Therefore, we support a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions away from a system which is controlled by and mostly benefits the powerful few, to a democratic, less bureaucratic system. Decision-making should, as much as possible, remain at the individual and local level, while assuring that civil rights are protected for all citizens.

## **6. COMMUNITY BASED ECONOMICS**

Redesign our work structures to encourage employee ownership and workplace democracy. Develop new economic activities and institutions that will allow us to use our new technologies in ways that are humane, freeing, ecological and accountable, and responsive to communities.

Establish some form of basic economic security, open to all.

Move beyond the narrow “job ethic” to new definitions of “work,” “jobs” and “income” that reflect the changing economy.

Restructure our patterns of income distribution to reflect the wealth created by those outside the formal monetary economy: those who take responsibility for parenting, housekeeping, home gardens, community volunteer work, etc.

Restrict the size and concentrated power of corporations without discouraging superior efficiency or technological innovation.

## **7. FEMINISM AND GENDER EQUITY**

We have inherited a social system based on male domination of politics and economics. We call for the replacement of the cultural ethics of domination and control with more cooperative ways of interacting that respect differences of opinion and gender. Human values such as equity between the sexes, interpersonal responsibility, and honesty must be developed with moral conscience. We should remember that the process that determines our decisions and actions is just as important as achieving the outcome we want.

## **8. RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

We believe it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across these lines.

We believe that the many diverse elements of society should be reflected in our organizations and decision-making bodies, and we support the leadership of people who have been traditionally closed out of leadership roles. We acknowledge and encourage respect for other life forms than our own and the preservation of biodiversity.

## **9. PERSONAL AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY**

We encourage individuals to act to improve their personal well-being and, at the same time, to enhance ecological balance and social harmony. We seek to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of the planet.

## **10. FUTURE FOCUS AND SUSTAINABILITY**

Our actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals. We seek to protect valuable natural resources, safely disposing of or “unmaking” all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival. We must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions.

Make the quality of life, rather than open-ended economic growth, the focus of future thinking.



# I. DEMOCRACY

Our nation was born as the first great experiment in modern democracy. We seek to rescue that heritage from the erosion of citizen participation. Moreover, we seek to dissolve the grip of the ideology, intoned by big-money interests for more than twenty years, that government is intrinsically undesirable and destructive of liberty and that elected officials should rightly “starve the beast” by slashing all spending on social program, in the name of freedom. We challenge that tactic by calling on all Americans to think deeply about the meaning of *government of the people, by the people, and for the people*. In a democracy, individuals come together to form structures of governance that protect and advance the common good. We the citizens *are* the government, and we the citizens can direct it to fulfill its finest goals and purposes. Our citizens must not permit usurpation of their authority by acts of individuals and government agencies that isolate or insulate government from their oversight and control. We, *the People*, have a responsibility to participate in self-government through all the means that our Constitution provides.

Citizens of a democracy must have the information and ability to determine the actions of their government. Vast concentrations of wealth and power that have occurred in recent years are inherently undemocratic. The deregulation of corporate activity and the decentralization and underfunding of the regulatory structures that remain—accompanied by the centralizing of big money—has been a disaster for our country. The true owners of the public lands, pension funds, and the public airwaves are the American people, who today have little or no control over their pooled assets or their commonwealth.

The power of civic action is an antidote to the corporate control of so much of our law-making and regulating. The pervasive abuse imposed by corporate power increasingly undermines our democracy, but the Green Party seeks to rekindle the democratic flame. As voting citizens, taxpayers, workers, consumers, and stakeholders, we unite to exercise our rights and, as Thomas Jefferson urged, to counteract the “excesses of the monied interests.” Toward this end, we consider serious reform of campaign funding to be essential, as well as curbs on the influence of corporations on lawmakers and regulatory agencies.

The Green Party considers American democracy to be an ongoing, unfolding project that is dynamic and creative in nature. We are committed to the strengthening of our civil society, including the many mediating institutions at the community level that have always characterized our democracy. We seek to heal the alienation and apathy that has been cultivated in the citizenry by the power-brokers of the status quo. Righteous anger about the crippling of our democracy is rising in the land, and the Greens offer constructive alternatives. In addition, we seek to repair the plummeting opinion of the United States in the international community resulting from our arrogant, narcissistic foreign policy of recent years. A growing and grave imbalance between the citizens of this country and the interests which extract power from the citizens is an imminent danger to our security and national and global social stability. We strongly feel that our country should view itself as a member of the community of nations... not above it. The United States could well play a leadership role in that community but only if we become committed to an eco-social vision of peace, national self-determination, and international cooperation.

Our goal is to become an important political force in this country, and to present candidates for election at every level of government.

# A. Political Reform



The Green Party proposes a comprehensive political reform agenda calling for real reform, accountability, and responsiveness in government through the powers and abilities of citizens as created by the Constitution of the United States of America.

1. Political debate, public policy, and legislation should be judged on their merits, not on the quid pro quo of political barter and money.
  2. We propose comprehensive campaign finance reform, including caps on spending and contributions, at the national and state level; and/or full public financing of elections to remove undue influence in political campaigns.
  3. All viable candidates at the state and federal levels should have free and equal radio and television time and print press coverage.
  4. We will work to ban or greatly limit political action committees and restrict soft money contributions.
  5. We support significant lobbying regulation such as strict rules that disclose the extent of political lobbying via “gifts” and contributions. Broad-based reforms of government operations, with congressional reorganization and ethics laws, must be instituted. At every level of government, we support Sunshine Laws that open up the political system to access by ordinary citizens.
  6. We support increasing the role of independent expository agencies, such as the General Accounting Office.
  7. We recognize individual empowerment, full citizen participation, and proportional representation as the foundation of an effective and pluralistic democracy.
  8. We demand choices in our political system. This can be accomplished by proportional representation voting systems such as
    - ▷ Choice Voting (candidate-based),
    - ▷ Mixed Member Voting (combines with district representation), and
    - ▷ Party List (party based);and semi-proportional voting systems such as
    - ▷ Limited Voting, and
    - ▷ Cumulative Voting.All are used throughout the free world and by U.S.
- businesses, and community and non-profit groups to increase democratic representation. We call on local governments to lead the way toward more electoral choice and broader representation.
9. We believe in majority rule and reject the present method of election without a majority. Accordingly, we call for the use of Instant Runoff Voting in chief executive races, (mayor, governor, president, etc.) where voters can rank their favorite candidates (1,2,3, etc.) to guarantee that the winner has majority support and that voters are not relegated to choosing between the lesser of two evils.
  10. We believe in multi-party democracy for partisan elections as the best way to guarantee majority rule, since more people will have representation at the table where policy is enacted. We assert that introduction of a multi-party democracy is essential because
    - ▷ The change in the structure of electoral politics will moderate the influence of extremist views and domination by the larger parties, and offer more fair representation to a greater number of citizens; and
    - ▷ A third party can validate and raise other points of view that need to be heard.
  11. The Electoral College is an 18th century anachronism. We call for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College and providing for the direct election of the president by Instant Runoff Voting. Until that time, we call for a proportional allocation of delegates in state primaries.
  12. Using our voice to help others find their voice, a national Green Party should spring from many sources: state and local Green Party electoral efforts, individual efforts, political involvement and direction at every level. We look toward forming bioregional confederations to coordinate regional issues based on natural and ecosystem boundaries instead of traditional political ones.

## B. Political Participation



Greens advocate direct democracy as a response to local needs and issues, where all concerned citizens can discuss and decide questions that immediately affect their lives, such as land use, parks, schools and community services. We would decentralize many state functions to the county and city level and seek expanded oversight and decision-making power of local governing bodies, such as neighborhood boards and associations, over issues that pertain to their jurisdiction.

1. To ensure transparency in government, lesser bodies such as neighborhood boards and county governments must have subpoena power over state governments, which, in turn, should have subpoena power over the national Congress.
2. Every jurisdiction should have a civilian complaint review board with subpoena power and the ability to order the dismissal of police officers who make false arrests and abuse those whom they arrest.
3. We call for more flexibility by states for local decision-making.
4. We advocate citizen rights to initiative, referendum and recall in all states. We believe that these tools of democracy should not be for sale to the wealthy who pay for signatures to buy their way onto the ballot. Therefore we call for a certain percentage of signatures gathered to come from volunteer collectors.
5. We call for citizen control of redistricting processes and moving the “backroom” apportionment process into the public light. Give the 10-year redistricting process to the Census Bureau or an independent agency. Minority representation must be protected and secured in order to protect minority rights.
6. We will act to broaden voter participation and ballot access. We advocate universal voter registration and an election day holiday and/or conducting elections over more than one day (say on a weekend).
7. We believe that a binding None of the Above option on the ballot should be considered.
8. We support statehood for the District of Columbia. The residents of D.C. must have the same rights and representation as all other U.S. citizens.
9. We advocate that all persons convicted of felonies shall regain full citizenship rights upon completion of their sentence, including the right to vote and to run for elected office.
10. We advocate that prisoners be granted the right to vote. [See section H. [Prison Conditions on page 35](#) in chapter II]
11. Individual participation in the life of our local community – in community projects and through personal, meaningful, voluntary activity – is also political and vital to the health of community.
12. We support citizen involvement at all levels of the decision-making process and hold that non-violent direct action can be an effective tool.
13. We advocate maintaining and enhancing federal guarantees in the areas of civil rights protections, environmental safeguards, and social “safety net” entitlements.
14. We demand re-enforcement of our civil liberties of speech, assembly, association and petition. Citizens may not be denied the right to public, non-violent protest. Citizens who engage in protest may not be intimidated by government surveillance, repression or retaliation.
15. We call for the implementation of Children's Parliaments, whereby representatives are elected by students to discuss, debate and make proposals to their city councils, school boards, county legislative bodies on a local level, to state legislatures statewide, and to Congress nationally.
16. As legislatures are updating voting equipment in response to the federal Helping America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2001, we support the growing movement of citizens calling for a strict requirement of a voter-verified paper audit trail for all voting machines installed across the United States. Electronic voting machines must include a verifiable paper trail that allows every voter to verify that his or her vote was recorded and counted accurately, coupled with random audits based on the paper trail. Technology must be used that incorporates a voter-verified paper trail that is accessible to vision-impaired voters.
17. Vote-counting software codes manufactured by private corporations have been deemed proprietary, banning public review of the means by which elections are determined. Therefore, to protect against fraud, voting machine source code must be open for public inspection and verification before and after an election.



# C. Community

Community is the basic unit of green politics because it is personal, value-oriented, and small enough for each member to have an impact. Community involvement is a foundation for public policy.

Social diversity is the well-spring of community life where old and young, rich and poor, and people of all races and beliefs can interact individually and learn to care for each other, and to understand and cooperate. We emphasize a return to local, face-to-face relationships that humans can understand and care about.

Among Greens, our guiding principle is to *think globally and act locally*. Community needs recognize a diversity of issues, and local control recognizes a variety of approaches to solving problems, ones that tend to be bottom-up not top-down. Green politics does not place its faith in paternalistic big government. Instead, Greens believe face-to-face interactions are essential to productive and meaningful lives for all citizens.

The Green vision includes building communities that nurture families, generate good jobs and housing, and provide public services; creating cities and towns that educate children, encourage recreation, and preserve natural and cultural resources; building local governments that protect people from environmental hazards and crime; and motivating citizens to participate in making decisions.

The Green vision calls for a global community of communities that recognize our immense diversity, respect our personal worth, and share a global perspective. We call for an approach to politics that acknowledges our endangered planet and habitat. Our politics responds to global crises with a new way of seeing our shared international security.

We will conceive a new era of international cooperation and communication that nurtures cultural diversity, recognizes the interconnectedness between communities, and promotes opportunities for cultural exchange and assistance.

1. We call for increased public transportation, convenient playgrounds and parks for all sections of cities and small towns, and funding to encourage diverse neighborhoods. [See section C. [Transportation on page 44](#) in chapter III]
2. We support a rich milieu of art, culture, and significant (yet modestly funded) programs such as the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities. [See section E. [Education and the Arts on page 27](#) in chapter II]

## Families and Children

3. We call for social policies to focus on protecting families. The young — our citizens of tomorrow — are increasingly at risk. Programs must ensure that children, who are among the most vulnerable members of society, receive basic nutritional, educational, and medical necessities. The Green Party supports and seeks to expand Head Start and Pre- and neo-natal programs. A Children's Agenda should be put in place to focus attention and concerted action on the future that is our

- children. [See section A.8. [Youth Rights on page 23](#) in chapter II]
4. A universal, federally funded childcare program for pre-school and young schoolchildren should be developed.
5. Family assistance such as the earned income tax credit, available to working poor families in which the parent supports and lives with the children, should be maintained and increased to offset regressive payroll taxes and growing inequalities in American society. [See section E. [True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness on page 61](#) in chapter IV]
6. A *living family wage* is vital to the social health of communities. [See section D. [Livable Income on page 61](#) in chapter IV]
7. The actuarial protection of social security is essential to the well-being of our seniors, and maintenance of the system's integrity is an essential part of a healthy community. We oppose privatization of social security, call for the program to remain under the aegis of the Federal

Government, and seek to expand its effectiveness. [See section M. [National Debt on page 70](#) in chapter IV]

8. We support the leading-edge work of non-profit public interest groups and those individuals breaking out of “careerism” to pursue non-traditional careers in public service.

### Alternative Community Service

9. We must create new opportunities for citizens to serve their communities through non-military

community service. Alternative community service to the military should be encouraged.

10. We advocate the formation of a Civilian Conservation Corps, with national leadership and state and local affiliates, to spearhead efforts to work on the tasks of environmental education, restoration of damaged habitats, reforestation, and cleaning up polluted waterways. Providing land and resource management skills will challenge young people while encouraging social responsibility.



## D. Foreign Policy

At the start of a new century, we stand poised between the geopolitical conflict of East versus West; a future marked by the aftermath of the catastrophic events of September 11, 2001; the dangers of global terrorism; the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan followed by the unprovoked invasion and occupation of Iraq; the escalation of conflict in the Middle East; and the continued research and development of nuclear weapons and the stockpiling of biochemical weapons.

In the area of trade, third- and fourth-world economies and resources are being ravaged, and our own economy and job security undermined, by global corporatization which concentrates greater power in the hands of fewer interests who are unaccountable to the vast majority of the world’s people.

As we overcome continued conflicts and violence we realize the difficulties inherent in encouraging democracy and of advancing the cause of peace. We face a more complex set of challenges in how our nation defines its national security. Greens support sustainable development and social and economic justice across the globe. Reducing militarism and reliance on arms policies is the key to progress toward collective security.

### 1. Foreign Policy – Peace and Disarmament

- a. As one of the initiators and primary authors of the United Nations Charter, the United States is obligated to conform to the stipulations of the U.S. Constitution, which identifies all such agreements as treaties that hold the authority of U.S. law. The U.S. government is pledged to abide by its principles and guidelines in the conduct of foreign relations and affairs.
- b. We recognize our government's obligation to take disputes with other nations or foreign bodies to the U.N. Security Council and General Assembly forum for negotiation and resolution. The U.N. and international laws, treaties and conventions that the U.S. has signed are the framework that controls U.S. military actions abroad.
- c. The U.S. must recognize the sovereignty of nation-states and their right of self-determination.
- d. We recognize and support the right of the U.N. to intervene in a nation-state engaged in genocidal acts or in its persistent violation and denial of the human rights of an ethnic or religious group within its boundaries, and the right to protect the victims of such acts.
- e. The U.S. is obligated to render military assistance or service under U.N. command to enforce a U.N. Security Council resolutions.
- f. The U.S. must recognize and abide by the authority of the U.N. General Assembly to act in a crisis situation by passing a resolution under the Uniting for Peace Procedure when the U.N. Security Council is stalemated by vetoes.
- g. We seek the permanent repeal of the veto power enjoyed by the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.
- h. We urge our government to sign the International Criminal Court agreement and respect the authority of that institution.
- i. Our government does not have the right to justify pre-emptive invasion of another country on the

grounds that the other country harbors, trains, equips and funds a terrorist cell.

j. Our government should establish a policy to abolish nuclear weapons. It should set the conditions and schedule for fulfilling that goal by taking the following steps:

- ▷ Declare a no-first-strike policy.
- ▷ Declare a no-pre-emptive strike policy.
- ▷ Declare that the U.S. will never threaten or use a nuclear weapon, regardless of size, on a non-nuclear nation.
- ▷ Sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Our pledge to end testing will open the way for non-nuclear states to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which has been held up by our refusal to sign the CTBT. Honor the conditions set in the NPT for nuclear nations.
- ▷ Reverse our withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and honor its stipulations.
- ▷ End the research, testing and stockpiling of all nuclear weapons of any size.
- ▷ Dismantle all nuclear warheads from their missiles.

k. We urge our government to sign the Toronto treaty banning the production, stockpiling, use and sale of land mines, and assist other nations in unearthing and disabling land mines buried in their lands.

l. We urge our government to end all stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons and all research, use, and sale of such weapons; and sign the convention that will establish the decrease and inspection of all nations' stockpiles of such weapons, which the U.S. abandoned.

m. The U.S. must allow foreign teams to visit the U.S. for verification purposes at least annually.

n. Our defense budget has increased out of all proportion to any military threat to the United States, and to our domestic social, economic and

environmental needs. The United States government must reduce our defense budget to half of its current size. The 2005 defense budget is estimated at around \$425 billion, and that does not take into account military expenditures not placed under the defense budget.

- o. The U.S. has over 700 foreign military bases. We urge our government to phase out all bases not specifically functioning under a U.N. resolution to keep peace and bring home our troops stationed abroad, except for the military assigned to protect a U.S. embassy. Many of these bases are small and can be closed immediately. We advocate further reductions in U.S. foreign military bases at a rate of closure of 1/4 to 1/5 of their numbers every year.
- p. Close the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly known as the School of the Americas, in Ft. Benning, Georgia.
- q. The U.S. is the largest arms seller and dealer in the world. We urge our government to prohibit all arms sales to foreign nations and likewise prohibit grants to impoverished and undemocratic nations unless the money is targeted on domestic, non-military needs. In addition, grants to other nations may not be used to release their own funds for military purposes.
- r. The U.S. must not be a conduit for defense contractors to market their products abroad and must shift our export market from arms to peaceful technology, industrial and agricultural products, and education.
- s. The U.S. must prohibit all covert actions used to influence, de-stabilize or usurp the governments of other nations, and likewise prohibit the assassination of, or assistance in any form for the assassination of, foreign government officials.
- t. We must build on the Earth Charter that came out of the 1992 U.N. environmental Earth Summit. New definitions of what constitutes real security between nations must be debated and adopted by the foreign policy community.

## 2. A Real Road to Peace in the Middle East

The Green Party of the United States recognizes that our greatest contribution to peace in the Middle East will come through our impact on U.S. policy in the region.

Our commitments to ecological wisdom, social justice, grass-roots democracy, and non-violence compel us to oppose U.S. government support for “friendly” regimes, both in Israel and in the Arab world, whenever those regimes violate human rights, international law, and existing treaties. Those same values compel us to support popular movements for peace and demilitarization, especially those that reach across the lines of conflict to engage both Palestinians and Israelis of good will.

- a. We reaffirm the right of self-determination for both Palestinians and Israelis, which precludes the self-determination of one at the expense of the other. We recognize the historical and contemporary cultural diversity of Israeli-Palestinian society, including the religious heritage of Jews, Christians, Muslims and others. This is a significant part of the rich cultural legacy of all these peoples and it must be respected. To ensure this, we support equality before international law rather than appeals to religious faith as the fair basis on which claims to the land of Palestine-Israel are resolved.
- b. We recognize that Jewish insecurity and fear of non-Jews is understandable in light of Jewish history of horrific oppression in Europe. However, we oppose as both discriminatory and ultimately self-defeating the position that Jews would be fundamentally threatened by the implementation of full rights to Palestinian-Israelis and Palestinian refugees who wish to return to their homes. As U.S. Greens, we refuse to impose our views on the people of the region; rather, we would turn the U.S. government towards a new policy, which itself recognizes the equality, humanity, and civil rights of Jews, Muslims, Christians, and all others who live in the region, and which seeks to build confidence in prospects for secular democracy.
- c. We reaffirm the right and feasibility of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in Israel. We acknowledge the significant challenges of equity and restitution this policy would encounter and call on the U.S. government to make resolution of these challenges a central goal of our diplomacy in the region.
- d. We reject the U.S.' unbalanced financial and military support of Israel while Israel occupies Palestinian lands. We call on the U.S. President and Congress to end all military aid to Israel, shifting much of that aid to ecologically appropriate local projects for economic and social development for Palestinians as well as Israelis. Until Israel withdraws from the Occupied Territories and dismantles the separation wall, we call on our government to suspend all other foreign aid to Israel as well.
- e. We demand that the U.S. government end its veto of Security Council resolutions pertaining to Israel. We urge our government to join with the U.N. to secure the withdrawal of Israel to the 1967 boundaries and to withhold its grants and loans to Israel until this withdrawal is undertaken.
- f. We recognize the limited natural resources in Palestine-Israel and the necessity of creating an Arab/Israeli commission to negotiate the sharing of water by both nationalities.
- g. We support a much stronger and supportive U.S. position with respect to all United Nations, European Union, and Arab League initiatives that seek a negotiated peace, and we support significantly greater U.S. financial support for such non-military solutions. We call for an immediate U.N.-sponsored, multinational peacekeeping and protection force in the Palestinian territories with the mandate to initiate a conflict-resolution commission.
- h. We call on the foreign and military affairs committees of the U.S. House and Senate to conduct full hearings on the status of human rights and war crimes in Palestine/Israel.
- i. We call on congressional intelligence committees to conduct full and public hearings on the development and deployment of weapons of mass destruction, whether by the Israeli military, irregular militias, or Arab states. It should be U.S. policy to seek the removal and/or destruction of all such weapons of mass death wherever they are found.
- j. We call for the complete dismantling of the Israeli separation wall in the occupied West Bank. A Green policy toward Israel and Palestine would offer such incentives for peace and mutual security that the wall would be unnecessary, and seen for what it is... an obstacle to peace and a unilateral escalation of conflict.
- k. We know that significant international opinion is committed to a two-state solution. Yet, we recognize that the two-state solution may be increasingly unrealistic in the face of economic and social conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Given this reality, we would consider support for a U.S. foreign policy that promotes serious reconsideration of the creation of one secular, democratic state for Palestinians and Israelis on the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan as the national home of both peoples, with Jerusalem as its capital. We encourage a new U.S. diplomatic initiative to begin the long process of negotiation, laying the groundwork for such a single-state constitution.
- l. We recognize that such a state might take many forms, such as what might emerge from careful consideration of the Swiss model. The eventual model that is chosen must be decided by the peoples themselves. We realize the enormous hostilities that now exist between the two peoples, but history tells us that these are not insurmountable among peace-seeking people.
- m. As an integral part of peace negotiations and the transition to peaceful democracy, we call for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission whose inaugurating action would be

mutual acknowledgement by Israelis and Palestinians that they have the same basic rights,

including the right to exist in the same, secure place.

### 3. Foreign Policy – Trade

We urge our government to do the following:

- a. Re-formulate all international trade relations and commerce as currently upheld by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB), and the nascent Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) to protect the labor, human rights, economy, environment and domestic industry of partner and recipient nations so that the growth of local industry and agriculture has the advantage over foreign corporate domination.
- b. Re-structure the rules of performance of the IMF/WB to end the debts of recipient nations, and to install strict standards in the IMF/WB that control the use of grants or loans to prevent fraud, misuse, and subversion of funds by recipient governments.
- c. Re-write the rules for investment of corporate capital in projects operated under the IMF/WB to guarantee the rights of the citizens of the nations receiving the investment and their right to public ownership and control of their own resources.
- d. Mandate and protect labor's right to organize, create unions and negotiate with management in all countries receiving U.S. investment, and require U.S. corporations that operate in other countries to guarantee those workers the same rights that American workers enjoy.
- e. Legislate and enable oversight by an independent agency or a labor union to verify that foreign workers' rights are protected.
- f. At home, secure the rights of our states to establish stricter standards for health, safety, and for the environment than those of our national government, and to protect themselves against substandard, imported goods.
- g. Secure the right of states and municipalities to refuse to invest in foreign businesses that do not abide by their standards for imported goods, fair trade, and environmental protection.
- h. Prohibit U.S. corporations from avoiding or evading payment of their taxes by banking abroad or locating their charters offshore.
- i. Every day over \$1 trillion dollars circles the globe in currency trade – wreaking havoc on low-economy nations – without obligation to sustainable investment. We seek to restrict the unfettered flow of capital and currency trade, and levy the Tobin tax of .05% on cross border currency transactions. [See section E.2. [Fair Taxation on page 62](#) in chapter IV]
- j. We support the funding and expansion of non-government organizations (NGOs) in their missions to educate and train people of less developed nations in initiating local business and economic development, and in providing health care and family planning.
- k. Under the agency of the United Nations, we demand that our government renew and initiate government funding and support for family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that request it.
- l. We reject the U.S. government's economic blockade of Cuba. We ask the U.S. Congress to lift the embargo and restore normal diplomatic relations and respect for national sovereignty, and demand that the U.S. government end its veto of U.N. resolutions pertaining to Cuba.





## E. Domestic Security

The Green Party calls for a complete, thorough, impartial, and independent investigation of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, including the role of the administration of George W. Bush, various U.S.- based corporations and interests, and other nations and third parties.

We call for the repeal of the USA PATRIOT Act. Many of its provisions, along with many of the other so-called National Security Acts, undermine and erode our Bill of Rights, and contribute to the destruction of the democratic foundation of checks and balances between the branches of government.

The Greens believe that all such systematic degradation or elimination of our constitutional protections must stop, and that corrective measures need to be taken in a timely manner by Congress to fully reinstate all such losses of guaranteed citizen protections.



## F. Demilitarization and Exploration of Space

The Green Party recognizes the need for the inspiration and education that the peaceful exploration of Space provides; the need for space-based systems to monitor environmental conditions on Earth; the many advances in space technology that benefit all people on Earth; and the inspiration provided to children by Space exploration can prompt them to pursue math, science, and other important courses of study. [See also section L. [Advanced Technology and Defense Conversion](#) on page 68 in chapter IV]

The peaceful exploration of Space has been usurped by the militarization of Space. The last four U.S. - backed military conflicts have used space-based technology to disrupt the computer and communication systems of sovereign states. The funds required for continuing peaceful Space exploration have been used, instead, for the design, implementation and deployment of wasteful and dangerous Space hardware, such as the Strategic Defense Initiative.

1. The Green Party calls for the end of Space militarization and opposes any form of space-based military aggression. We embrace peaceful Space exploration as a means for all people on this planet to work together. The benefits of inspired education are well worth the investment in peaceful Space exploration.
2. The Green Party supports only the peaceful and sustainable exploration of Space, on a case by case, mission-specific basis, including the signing of the International Treaty for the Demilitarization of Space. The Green Party advocates a reduction of human-staffed space flight due to the high cost and risk for human life and the availability of automated technology that can perform necessary functions in space-based research.



# II. SOCIAL JUSTICE

Historically, America led the world in establishing a society with democratic values such as equal opportunity and protection from discrimination. Today, however, our country is among the most extreme examples of industrialized nations that have a widening gap between the wealthy and the rest of its citizenry—the working poor, the struggling middle class, and those who increasingly cannot make ends meet.

Our public schools, from kindergarten through college, are forced to cut back countless programs and services. Fees for community colleges are up sharply, and many public universities must turn away qualified students. More than 43 million Americans have no medical insurance coverage. The crisis in publicly subsidized housing is intensifying, while publicly funded “corporate welfare” continues unabated. Our tax code favors the wealthy. Our criminal justice system assigns long prison terms to hundreds of thousands of perpetrators of victimless crimes, such as selling marijuana. Our civil liberties of privacy and free speech are impaired by the excesses of the USA PATRIOT Act and kindred new laws that use a national tragedy (the attacks on September 11, 2001) as an excuse to impose ubiquitous surveillance and control over citizens. In addition, discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or race continues to sap the potential of our society and to violate personal dignity.

Feelings of isolation and helplessness are common in America today. Children are increasingly shaped by an “electronic childhood” with little direct experience of nature and free play. Our families are scattered, our popular culture is crassly manipulated by the profit motives of increasingly concentrated media conglomerates, and our sense of community is a pale shadow of what earlier generations of Americans knew.

The Green Party strongly believes that the quality of life is determined not only by material aspects that can be measured and counted but also by elements that cannot be quantified. We firmly support the separation of church and state, but we also acknowledge the spiritual dimension of life, and we honor the cultivation of various types of spiritual experience in our diverse society.

We believe that artistic expression and a thriving structure of art institutions are key to community well-being. We believe that a deep and broad embrace of nonviolence is the only effective way to stop cycles of violence, from the home to the streets to the international level. We advocate a diverse system of education that would introduce children early to the wonders of the *Great School* (Nature), and would cultivate the wisdom of eco-education, eco-economics, eco-politics, and eco-culture. We seek to protect our children from the corrosive effects of mass culture that trains them to regard themselves first and foremost as consumers.

We support the shift in modern medicine to include healing through complementary therapies and engagement with the *Great Hospital* (Nature). We seek, in short, to facilitate the healthy unfolding of the person within the unfolding story of the family, community, bioregion, state, nation, and Earth community.

# A. Civil Rights and Equal Rights



The foundation of any democratic society is the guarantee that each member of society has equal rights. Respect for our constitutionally protected rights is our best defense against discrimination and the abuse of power. Also, we recognize an intimate connection between our rights as individuals and our responsibilities to our neighbors and the planet. The Green Party shall strive to secure universal and effective recognition and observance of the principles and spirit expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an international standard that all nations must meet.

One of our key values is respect for diversity. We are committed to establishing relationships that honor diversity; that support the self-definition and self-determination of all people; and that consciously confront the barriers of racism, sexism, homophobia, class oppression, ageism, and the many ways our culture separates us from working together. We support affirmative action to remedy discrimination, to protect constitutional rights and to provide equal opportunity under the law.

## 1. Women's Rights

Since the beginning of what we call civilization, when men's dominance over women was firmly established until the present day, our history has been marred with oppression of and brutality to women. The Green Party deplors this system of male domination, known as *patriarchy*, in all its forms, both subtle and overt – from oppression, inequality, and discrimination to domestic violence, rape, trafficking and forced slavery. The change the world is crying for cannot occur unless women's voices are heard. Democracy cannot work without equality for women that provides equal participation and representation. It took an extraordinary and ongoing fight over 72 years for Women to win the right to vote. However, the Equal Rights Amendment has still not been ratified.

We believe that equality should be a given, and that all Greens must work toward that end. We are committed to increasing participation of women in politics, government and leadership so they can change laws, make decisions, and create policy solutions that affect and will improve women's lives, and we are building our party so that Greens can be elected to office to do this. In July 2002 the Women's Caucus of the Green Party of the United States was founded to carry out the Party's commitment to women.

We also support, and call on others to support, the many existing and ongoing efforts for women:

### Social Equality

- a. We support the equal application of the Constitution to all citizens, and therefore call for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). We urge accelerated ratification by three or more of the remaining 15 states that are required to pass ERA into law and into the Constitution. We urge renewed efforts and campaigns to ratify the ERA. We support House Resolution 98, using the precedent of a three-state strategy for ratification.
- b. We call for equal representation of women in Congress instead of the current 13%.
- c. The Green Party calls for U.S. passage of CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, which was adopted in 1979 by the U.N. General Assembly and ratified by 173 countries. The U.S. is one of the very few countries, and the only industrialized nation, that have not ratified it.
- d. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission should actively investigate and prosecute sexual harassment complaints. Women who file complaints must not be persecuted and should be protected under federal and state law. We must enshrine in law the basic principle that women have the same rights as men, and promote gender equality and fairness in the work force to ensure that women receive equal pay for jobs of equal worth.
- e. We support the inclusion of an equal number of women and men in peace talks and negotiations, not only because these efforts directly affect their

lives and those of their husbands, children and families, but also because when women are involved, the negotiations are more successful.

### Reproductive Rights

- f. Women's rights must be protected and expanded to guarantee each woman's right as a full participant in society, free from sexual harassment, job discrimination or interference in the intensely personal choice about whether to have a child.
- g. Women's right to control their bodies is non-negotiable. It is essential that the option of a safe, legal abortion remains available. The "morning-after" pill must be affordable and easily accessible without a prescription, together with a government-sponsored public relations campaign to educate women about this form of contraception. Clinics must be accessible and must offer advice on contraception and the means for contraception; consultation about abortion and the performance of abortions, and; abortion regardless of age or marital status.
- h. We endorse women's right to use contraception and, when they choose, to have an abortion. This right cannot be limited to women's age or marital status. Contraception and abortion must be included in all health insurance policies in the U.S., and any state government must be able to legally offer these services free of charge to women at the poverty level. Public health agencies operating abroad should be allowed to offer family planning, contraception, and abortion in all countries that ask for those services. We oppose our government's habit of cutting family planning funds when those funds go to agencies in foreign countries that give out contraceptive devices, offer advice on abortion, and perform abortions.
- i. We encourage women and men to prevent unwanted pregnancies. It is the inalienable right and duty of every woman to learn about her body and to be aware of the phases of her menstrual cycle, and it is the duty for every man to be aware of the functions and health of his and his partner's bodies. This information is necessary for self determination, to make informed decisions, and to prevent unintended consequences. Unplanned conception takes control away from individuals and makes them subject to external controls. The "morning-after" pill and option of a safe and legal abortion need to remain available.

### Economic Equality

- j. Since, nationally, women still earn only 70% of men's wages for equal jobs, the Green Party calls for the introduction and passage of federal and state laws to achieve pay equity, and funding for

the enforcement of such laws.

- k. Single mothers are the largest and most severely impoverished group in the United States, which explains why 25% of the children in our country live below the poverty line. Welfare reform has forced mothers to abandon their children to travel to minimum wage jobs. With the extreme pay inequity, single mothers cannot afford child care, nurture their children, and move out of poverty.
- l. The Green Party supports real reforms to end poverty and return dignity and opportunity to all mothers. We call for implementing innovative programs that work with the particular and special needs of motherhood. We also support other programs such as a universal basic income (known also as a guaranteed income or Citizen Dividend, as described in [True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness on page 61](#)) that will provide for those who nurture the next generation — work that is of incalculable importance to our society.

### Violence and Oppression

- m. Language is often used as a weapon by those with power, and women have traditionally borne the brunt of inflicted injuries. Freedom of speech is vital to democracy. However, we believe that this freedom should not be used to perpetuate oppression and abuse.
- n. Rape, domestic violence and other violence to women are increasing nationwide. We must address the root cause of all violence even as we specifically address violence to women. We cannot allow this to continue and call for increased funding for programs to address it.
- o. The Green Party has zero tolerance for the illegal international trafficking in humans. Of the millions of humans trafficked worldwide, the large majority are women and children who are bought and sold as slaves and forced to labor against their will primarily in prostitution, but also in agriculture, sweat shops, domestic service and in other forms of servitude. According to Human Rights Watch, in all cases coercive tactics — including deception, fraud, intimidation, isolation, threat and use of physical force, or debt bondage — are used to control women. Figures from 2003 show 50,000 victims, both women and children, were trafficked to the U.S.
- p. The Green Party supports all efforts to eradicate this extreme abuse of human rights, including but not limited to enforcement of existing laws and passage of tough new ones, punishing traffickers, aiding victims, increasing public awareness, reforming immigration laws, supporting existing programs and creating new ones.
- q. We support the State Department's annual

Trafficking in Persons Report as an important document to begin to combat this abuse. We support and urge enforcement of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (HR 3244) signed into law on October 28, 2000. This Act authorizes funding for the prevention of trade in human beings and for protecting victims. It gives

the State Department a historic opportunity to create an office with the exclusive responsibility of ending traffic in humans and protecting the victims of this world-wide trade. We urge committed political support to achieve the cooperation of all different levels of government.

## 2. Racial Discrimination

The development of the United States has been marked by conflict over questions of race. Our nation was formed only after Native Americans were displaced. The institution of slavery had as its underpinnings the belief in white supremacy, which we as Greens condemn. In slavery's aftermath, people of color have borne the brunt of violence and discrimination. The Green Party unequivocally condemns these evils which continue to be a social problem of paramount significance.

- a. We support efforts to overcome the effects of over 200 years of racial discrimination.
- b. We call for an end to official support for any remaining symbols of slavery and specifically call for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from all government buildings.
- c. People of color in this country have legitimate claims to reparations in the form of monetary compensation for centuries of discrimination. We also uphold the right of the descendants of African slaves to self-determination, as we do for all indigenous peoples.
- d. We condemn the practice of racial profiling by law enforcement agencies, which are guilty of stopping motorists, harassing individuals, or using unwarranted violence against suspects with no other justification than race or ethnic background.
- e. We favor strong measures to combat official racism in the forms of police brutality directed against people of color.
- f. We support effective enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, including language access to voting.
- g. We oppose discriminatory English-only pressure groups. We call for a national language policy that would encourage all citizens to be fluent in at least two languages. [See section K. [Immigration/Emigration on page 38](#) in this chapter]
- h. We strongly support the vigorous enforcement of civil rights laws, the aggressive prosecution of hate crimes, and the strengthening of legal services for the poor.

## 3. Indigenous Peoples

We have great respect for Native American cultures, especially their deference for community and the Earth.

- a. We recognize both the sovereignty of Native American tribal governments and the Federal Government's trust obligation to Native American people. Native American nations are just that - *nations* - and should be treated in like fashion, with the special circumstance that they are located within the United States.
- b. The federal government is obligated to deal in good faith with Native Americans; honor its treaty obligations; adequately fund programs for the betterment of tribal governments and their people; affirm the religious rights of Native Americans in ceremonies (American Indian Religious Freedom Act); provide funds for innovative economic development initiatives, education and public health programs; and respect land, water and mineral rights within the borders of reservations and traditional lands.
- c. We support efforts to broadly reform the Bureau of Indian Affairs to make this vast agency more responsible and more responsive to tribal governments.
- d. We support the just settlement of the claims of the thousands of Native American uranium miners who have suffered and died from radiation

exposure. We condemn the stance of secrecy taken by the Atomic Energy Commission during this era and its subsequent claim of government immunity, taken knowingly and immorally at the expense of Native people. We support the complete clean-up of those mines and tailing piles, which are a profoundly destructive legacy of the Cold War.

- e. Native American land and treaty rights often stand as the front line against government and

multinational corporate attempts to plunder energy, mineral, timber, fish, and game resources; pollute water, air, and land in the service of the military; expand economically; and consume natural resources. We support legal, political, and grassroots efforts by, and on behalf of, Native Americans to protect their traditions, rights, livelihoods, and sacred spaces.

## 4. Justice for Native Hawaiians: Kanaka Maoli

Since illegal annexation in 1898, the Federal and State governments have cheated and neglected the native Hawaiian people. In 1993, the U.S. Congress passed, and President Clinton signed into law, the “Apology Bill” (U.S. Public Law 103-150). This admission of crime states in part, “the native Hawaiians have never lost their inherent sovereignty nor their national home base.”

The Green Party demands justice for *kanaka maoli*. We support the following:

- a. Protecting sacred and culturally significant sites.
- b. Efforts to nurture native Hawaiian culture.
- c. Kanaka maoli leadership and guardianship in protecting gathering rights, and lobbying the legislature to safeguard these rights without interference.
- d. Return of, or fair compensation for, ceded lands.
- e. Immediate distribution of Hawaiian Homelands, with government funds allocated for the necessary infrastructure.
- f. Prohibition of future sale or diminishment of the Ceded Land Trust.
- g. A call for open dialogue among all residents of Hawai'i on the sovereignty option of full independence.
- h. Hawaiian sovereignty in a form that is fair to both native Hawaiians and other residents of Hawai'i.
- i. We acknowledge and actively endorse the inherent and absolute right of indigenous nations to self-determination, and thereby call upon the U.S. government to reverse its opposition to enactment of the proposed United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in its entirety.

## 5. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

In keeping with the Green Key Values of diversity, social justice and feminism, we support full legal and political equality for all persons, regardless of sex, gender, or sexual orientation.

- a. The Green Party affirms the rights of all individuals to freely choose intimate partners, regardless of their sex, gender, or sexual orientation.
- b. We support the recognition of equal rights of persons gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender to housing, jobs, civil marriage, medical benefits, child custody, and in all areas of life provided to all other citizens.
- c. We support the inclusion of language in state and federal anti-discrimination law that ensures the rights of intersex individuals and prohibits discrimination based on gender identity, characteristics, and expression. We are opposed to intersex genital mutilation.
- d. We support the right of all persons to self-determination with regard to gender identity and sex. We therefore support the right of intersex and transgender individuals to be free from coercion and involuntary assignment of gender or sex. We support access to medical and surgical treatment for assignment or reassignment of gender or sex, based on informed consent.
- e. We support legislation against all forms of hate crimes, including those directed against people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, and intersex.

## 6. Rights of the Disabled

We support the full enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act to enable all people with disabilities to achieve independence and function at the highest possible level. Government should work to ensure that children with disabilities are provided with the same educational opportunities as those without disabilities.

The physically and mentally challenged are people who are differently-abled from the majority, but who are nevertheless able to live independently. The mentally ill are people with serious mental problems who often need social support networks. Physically and mentally challenged people have the right to live independently in their communities. The mentally ill also have the right to live independently, circumscribed only by the limitations of their illness. These people are their own best advocates in securing their rights and for living in the social and economic mainstream.

Current Medicaid policy forces many challenged people to live in costly state-funded institutions. Excluding these people from society alienates them; excluding them from the work force denies them the chance to use their potentials.

The diminishing funds available to provide care for the growing number of the mentally ill often result in their homelessness, vagrancy and dependence on short-term crisis facilities. Lack of funding also increases the necessity of placing them in long-term, locked facilities.

The Green Party urges the government to:

- a. Increase rehabilitation funding so that persons with disabilities can pursue education and training to reach their highest potential. The differently-abled should participate fully in the allocation decisions of state rehabilitation departments' funds.
- b. Aggressively implement the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- c. Fund in-home support services to allow the differently-abled to hire personal care attendants while remaining at home.
- d. Allocate adequate funding to support community-based programs that provide out-patient medical services, case management services and counseling programs. We should provide a residential setting within the community for those who do not need institutional care but who are unable to live independently.
- e. Make it easier for the chronically mentally ill to apply for and receive Supplemental Security Income.
- f. Mainstream the differently-abled. Increase the training of teachers in regards to the needs of differently-abled students.
- g. Discourage stereotyping of the mentally and physically challenged by the entertainment industry and the media.
- h. Fund programs to increase public sensitivity to the needs of the mentally ill and differently-abled.

## 7. Religious Freedom and Secular Equality

The United States Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of religion. We affirm the right of each individual to the exercise of conscience and religion, while maintaining the constitutionally mandated separation of government and religion. We believe that federal, state, and local governments must remain neutral regarding religion.

We call for:

- a. Ending discriminatory federal, state, and local laws against particular religious beliefs, and non-belief. The U.S. Constitution states that there shall be no religious test for public office. This requirement should apply to oaths (or affirmations) for holding public office at any level, employment at all government levels, oaths for witnesses in courts, oaths for jury membership, and the oath for citizenship.
- b. Prosecution of hate crimes based on religious affiliation or practice.
- c. Elimination of displays of religious symbols, monuments, or statements on government buildings, property, websites, money, or documents.



- d. Restoration of the Pledge of Allegiance to its pre-1954 version, eliminating the politically motivated addition of “under God.”
- e. Ending faith-based initiatives and charitable choice programs, whereby public funds are used to support religious organizations that do not adhere to specified guidelines and standards, including anti-discrimination laws.
- f. Ending school vouchers whereby public money pays for students in religious schools.
- g. Ending governmental use of the doctrines of specific religions to define the nature of family, marriage, and the type and character of personal relationships between consenting adults.
- h. Ending religiously-based curricula in government-funded public schools.
- i. Ending the use of religion as a justification to deny children necessary medical care or subject them to physical and emotional abuse.
- j. Ending the use of religion by government to define the role and rights of women in our society.
- k. Revocation of the Congressional charter of the Boy Scouts of America. Any private organization that practices bigotry against certain religious beliefs and classes of people should not have a Congressional endorsement or access to public property and funds.

## 8. Youth Rights

All human beings have the right to a life that will let them achieve their full potential. Young people are one of the least protected classes of human beings, yet they represent our future. We must ensure they have an upbringing that allows them to take their place as functioning, productive, and self-actualized members of their community.

- a. Youth are not the property of their parents or guardians, but are under their care and guidance.
- b. Youth have the right to survive by being provided adequate food, shelter and comprehensive health care, including prenatal care for mothers.
- c. Youth have the right to be protected from abuse, harmful drugs, violence, environmental hazards, neglect, and exploitation.
- d. Youth have the right to develop in a safe and nurturing early environment provided by affordable child care and pre-school preparation.
- e. Youth have the right to an education that is stimulating, relevant, engaging, and that fosters their natural desire to learn.
- f. Young people’s creative potential should be encouraged to the greatest extent possible.
- g. Young people should have input into the direction and pace of their own education, including input into the operation of their educational institutions.
- h. Young people should be provided with education regarding their own and others' sexuality at the earliest appropriate time.
- i. Young people should be provided the opportunity to express themselves in their own media, including television, radio, films and the Internet. Young people should also be given skills in analyzing commercial media.
- j. Young people should be kept free from coercive advertising at their educational institutions.

## 9. Veterans’ Rights

Support for men and women in the armed forces must go far beyond the rhetoric used to discredit the peace movement in the U.S. today. We believe that the ill-advised and illegal actions of the U.S. administration have unnecessarily put our troops in harm's way. We further believe that the dangerous burden of fighting the unnecessary war in Iraq, and the wars that may follow, due to the administration's overly narrow and militaristic response to terrorism is disproportionately borne by families of lesser means. Those who are required to carry out militaristic policies, often with great hardship to themselves, their families, and even the risk of their lives, deserve our respect and our commitment to adequate compensation and benefits.

We recommend the following actions:

- a. Increase the current pay levels, monthly imminent danger pay, and family separation allowances for those risking their lives in combat zones.
- b. Ensure that all pre-deployment physicals are completed and carried out within the standard allotted time period and that medical follow-ups are routinely done on all soldiers.
- c. Establish a panel of independent medical doctors to examine and oversee the policies of the military regarding forced vaccinations and shots, often with experimental drugs.
- d. Honor all laws concerning time limits on deployments.
- e. Provide better care for the wounded, sick, and injured soldiers returning home. The Pentagon must take all steps necessary to fully diagnose and treat both physical and mental health conditions resulting from service in all combat zones.
- f. Ensure a smooth transition from active military service to civilian life by providing counseling, housing, emergency management, job protection, and other support systems.
- g. Restore full funding for veterans' health programs.
- h. Request Congress to enact a new GI Bill, similar to

the one that began after World War II and ended in 1981, to provide the following benefits:

- ▷ Tuition grants for four years of college or other educational opportunities.
- ▷ Low interest loans for housing or business start-ups.
- ▷ Free medical care for military personnel and their families for ten years following separation from the armed forces — until universal health care becomes a reality.
- i. Support and respect Conscientious Objector status during all phases of the process. We fully support the right of individuals in the military service to modify or completely separate from military involvement because of conscientious objection. We call upon all military entities and officers to support a transparent and democratic conscientious objection process free of harassment, imprisonment, or deployment to war zones for those pursuing the conscientious objection process.
- j. Recognized, independent veteran organizations must have access to military personnel to ensure they are being informed of their rights. This is especially true for those who are hospitalized due to service related injuries or illnesses.

## 10. Consumer Protection

Consumers have the right to adequate enforcement of the federal and state consumer protection laws. Health and safety are of paramount importance, so we oppose lax or inappropriate regulatory actions.

- a. Consumers should have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives and protect their interests, beyond simply voting on election day.
- b. We support the creation of consumer advocacy agencies in order to protect the interests of consumers against corporate lobbyists who have too often successfully argued before regulatory agencies against consumer rights. We would require legal monopolies and regulated industries (including electric, gas, water, and telephone utilities) to set up statewide consumer action groups to act on behalf of and advocate for consumer interests.
- c. We call for better information for consumers about the products they buy, and where and how they are made. We endorse *truth in advertising*, including the clear definition of words like “recycled” and “natural.”
- d. We defend the rights of individuals to participate in class action lawsuits against manufacturers of unsafe products. We call for restrictions on secrecy agreements that may prevent lawsuits by not revealing damaging information.
- e. We support laws to protect “whistle blowers.”
- f. We call for outlawing the use of animals in cosmetics and household product testing, in tobacco and alcohol testing, and in weapons development or other military programs.

## 11. War on Terrorism

See also section D.[Foreign Policy on page 11](#) and E.[Domestic Security on page 15](#) in chapter I.

The so-called *war on terrorism* must not become an assault on the civil liberties that are enshrined in our Constitution. The price of freedom is not the loss of liberty. Constitutionally protected rights — fought for by American patriots — are rights the Green Party patriotically holds in the highest regard. Greens demand that the Justice Department cease and desist its wholesale rollback of constitutional protections and its daily dismantling of legal safeguards.

The use of Homeland Defense monies to spy on citizens exercising First Amendment rights is particularly onerous, as are “sneak and peek” provisions of the U.S.A.P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act that allows surveillance of libraries, readers, the Internet, and computer users. Basic rights ensuring individual privacy are under attack. The U.S. government's use of high tech tools, including intrusive monitoring, data mining and analysis to identify and disrupt citizen activists, should be seen as an attack on fundamental rights of an engaged, active citizenry.

The Green Party calls on Congress and the courts to reign in constitutional and civil liberties abuses that have become prevalent in the Bush administration and the John Ashcroft Justice Department.



## B. Environmental Justice

Greens support a holistic approach to justice... recognizing that environmental justice, social justice and economic justice depend on and support each other.

Low-income citizens and minorities suffer disproportionately from environmental hazards in the workplace, at home, and in their communities. Inadequate laws, lax enforcement of existing environmental regulations, and weak penalties for infractions undermine environmental protection.

Therefore, the Green Party advocates:

1. Devoting greater efforts to full enforcement and prosecution of environmental crimes.
2. Funding environmental crime units for district attorneys in counties with significant pollution problems.
3. Imposing a moratorium on siting new toxic chemical or waste facilities in those counties with the highest percentage exposure to hazardous substances.
4. Not forcing workers to choose between a hazardous job or no job at all.
5. Preventing communities, especially low-income or minority communities, from being coerced by governmental agencies or corporations into siting hazardous materials, or accepting environmentally hazardous practices in order to create jobs.
6. Preceding the siting of hazardous materials or practices with public hearings, conducted in the language of those community members who will be directly affected.
7. Requiring corporations to permit on-site visitations by community watchdog committees, and the appointment of a neighborhood environmentalist to their boards of directors.



## C. Economic Justice / Social Safety Net

The passage of the 1996 Welfare Act by Congress, and its signing by the President, confronts us with hard choices. Democrats and Republicans seem to be saying we cannot afford to care for children and poor mothers. In ending over fifty years of federal policy guaranteeing cash assistance for poor children, Congress has set in motion a radical experiment that will have a profound impact on the lives of the weakest members of our society. How will state, city and county governments, local communities, businesses, religious institutions — all of us — respond?

We have a special responsibility to the health and well-being of the young. Yet we see the federal safety net being removed and replaced with limited and potentially harsh state welfare programs. How will social services be adequately provided if local resources are already stretched thin?

We believe our community priorities must first protect the young and helpless. Yet how will state legislatures and agencies, under pressure from more powerful interests, react? We believe local decision-making is important, but we realize, as we learned during the civil rights era, that strict federal standards must guide state actions in providing basic protections. As the richest nation in history, we should not condemn millions of children to a life of poverty, while corporate welfare is increased to historic highs.

The Green Party opposes the privatization of Social Security. It is critical that the public protections of Social Security are not privatized and subjected to increased risk. The bottom 20% of American senior citizens get roughly 80% of their income from Social Security, and without Social Security, nearly 70% of black elderly and 60% of Latino elderly households would be in poverty.



## D. Welfare: A Commitment to Ending Poverty

An unjust society is an unsustainable society. When communities are stressed by poverty, violence and despair, our ability to meet the challenges of the post-industrial age are critically impaired. A holistic, future-focused perspective on how we distribute resources in this country would consider the effects of such distribution not just on our present needs, but on the seventh generation to come.

It is time for a radical shift in our attitude toward support for families, children, the poor and the disabled. Such support must not be given grudgingly; it is the right of those presently in need and an investment in our future. We must take an uncompromising position that the care and nurture of children, elders and the disabled are essential to a healthy, peaceful, and sustainable society. We should recognize that the work of their caregivers is of social and economic value, and reward it accordingly. Ensuring that children and their caregivers have access to an adequate, secure standard of living should form the cornerstone of our economic priorities. Only then can we hope to build our future on a foundation of healthy, educated children who are raised in an atmosphere of love and security.

1. All people have a right to food, housing, medical care, jobs that pay a living wage, education, and support in times of hardship.
2. Work performed outside the monetary system has inherent social and economic value, and is essential to a healthy, sustainable economy and peaceful communities. Such work includes: child

and elder care; homemaking; voluntary community service; continuing education; participating in government; and the arts.

3. We call for restoration of a federally funded entitlement program to support children, families, the unemployed, elderly and disabled, with no time limit on benefits. This program should be funded through the existing welfare budget, reductions in military spending and corporate subsidies, and a fair, progressive income tax.
4. We call for a graduated supplemental income, or negative income tax, that would maintain all individual adult incomes above the poverty level, regardless of employment or marital status.
5. We advocate reinvesting a significant portion of the military budget into family support, living-wage job development, and work training programs. Publicly funded work training and education programs should have a goal of increasing employment options at finding living-wage jobs.
6. We support public funding for the development of living-wage jobs in community and environmental service. For example, environmental clean-up, recycling, sustainable agriculture and food production, sustainable forest management, repair and maintenance of public facilities, neighborhood-based public safety, aides in schools, libraries and childcare centers, and construction and renovation of energy-efficient housing. We oppose enterprise zone give-aways which benefit corporations more than inner-city communities
7. The accumulation of individual wealth in the U.S. has reached grossly unbalanced proportions. It is clear that we cannot rely on the rich to regulate their profit-making excesses for the good of society through “trickle-down economics.” We must take aggressive steps to restore a fair distribution of income. We support tax incentives for businesses that apply fair employee wage distribution standards, and income tax policies that restrict the accumulation of excessive individual wealth.
8. Forcing welfare recipients to accept jobs that pay wages below a living wage drives wages down and exploits workers for private profit at public expense. We reject workfare as being a form of indentured servitude.
9. Corporations receiving public subsidies must provide jobs that pay a living wage, observe basic workers' rights, and agree to affirmative action policies.

## E. Education and the Arts



The failing report card of American education is troubling for almost every American. Who fails to see the connection between our investment in education and our success as a people? Who believes there is no relation between personal achievement and a quality education — an education that teaches creative and critical thinking skills and a respect for lifelong learning?

Access to quality education for all Americans is the difference that will lead to a strong and diverse community. Fundamental changes in our priorities are needed at the national and local levels, within the public and private sectors, in the classroom, and at home to make education our first priority.

### 1. Education

Greens support educational diversity. We hold no dogma absolute, continually striving for truth in the realm of ideas. We open ourselves, consciously and intuitively, to truth and beauty in the world of nature. We view learning as a lifelong process to which all people have an equal right.

Education starts with choice, and within public education we believe in broad choices. Magnet schools, Site-based Management, Schools within Schools, alternative models, and parental involvement are ways in which elementary education can be changed to make a real difference in the lives of our children. Curricula should focus on skills — both basic skills that serve as a solid foundation for higher learning, and exploratory approaches that expand horizons, such as distance learning, interactive education, computer proficiency, perspectives that bring an enriched awareness of nature (biological literacy), intercultural experiences, and languages.

Greens view learning as a lifelong and life-affirming process. In learning, and openness to learning, we create the foundation of our platform.

- a. We advocate creative and noncompetitive education at every age level, and the inclusion of cultural diversity in all curricula. We encourage hands-on approaches that promote a multitude of individual learning styles.
- b. Parental responsibility should be encouraged by supporting parenting, as more families confront economic conditions that demand more time be spent away from home. Parents should be as involved as possible in their children's education; values do start with parents. Teaching human sexuality is a parental and school responsibility.
- c. Student responsibility is a key to developing capabilities. Greens hold strongly to the empowerment of individuals. Students should recognize their own personal responsibilities and strive to achieve their fullest potential as individuals.
- d. Federal policy on education should act principally to ensure equal access to a quality education.
- e. Educational funding formulas at the state level need to be adjusted as needed to avoid gross inequalities between districts and schools. Educational grants should provide balance to ensure equal educational access for minority, deprived, special needs, and exceptional children. In higher education, federal college scholarship aid should be increased and offered to any qualified student.
- f. Our teachers are underpaid, overworked and rarely supplied with the resources necessary to do their work. It is time to stop disinvesting in education, and start placing it at the top of our social and economic agenda.
- g. We call for equitable state and national funding for education and the creation of schools controlled by parent-teacher governing bodies.
- h. We oppose vouchers, or any scheme that will transfer money out of the public school system. That course only leads to a separate and unequal educational system. We also oppose charter schools or the administration of public schools by private, for-profit entities.
- i. We support after-school programs for "latchkey" children.
- j. We advocate state funding for day care that includes school children under the age of ten when after-school programs are not available.
- k. Classroom teachers at the elementary and high school levels should be given professional status and salaries comparable to related professions requiring advanced education, training and responsibility.
- l. Principals are also essential components in effective educational institutions. We encourage state Departments of Education and school boards to deliver more programmatic support and decision-making to the true grassroots level—the classroom teacher and school principal.
- m. Use of computers in the early grades should not supplant the development of basic interpersonal, perceptual, and motor skills as a foundation for learning.
- n. Dispute resolution is an important part of resolving classroom or after-school disputes, and a life skill that all children should learn. We call for the teaching of non-violent conflict resolution at all levels of education.
- o. We recognize the viable alternative of home-based education.
- p. We support a host of innovative and critical educational efforts, such as bi-lingual education, continuing education, job retraining, mentoring and apprenticeship programs.
- q. We are deeply concerned about the intervention in our schools of corporations that promote a culture of consumption and waste. Schools should not be vehicles for commercial advertising. Schools must safeguard students' privacy rights and not make private student information available on corporate (or federal government) request.
- r. Within higher education, we oppose military and corporate control over the priorities and topics of academic research.
- s. We support tuition-free post secondary (collegiate and vocational) public education.
- t. In an economy that demands higher skills and a democracy that depends on an informed, educated electorate, opportunities for universal higher education and life-long learning must be vastly expanded.
- u. Until tuition-free schooling is available to all, student loans should be available to all students attending college, and should be repayable as a proportion of future earnings rather than at a fixed rate.
- v. Individualized training accounts should be made available to students who choose to pursue vocational and continuing education.
- w. The Leave No Child Behind Act must be repealed, especially the section that gives the military access to student records.

## 2. The Arts

Freedom of artistic expression is a fundamental right and a key element in empowering communities, and in moving us toward sustainability and respect for diversity. Artists can create in ways that foster healthy, non-alienating relationships between people and their daily environments, communities, and the Earth. This can include both artists whose themes advocate compassion, nurturance, or cooperation; and artists whose creations unmask the often-obscure connections between various forms of violence, domination, and oppression, or effectively criticize aspects of the very community that supports their artistic activity. The arts can only perform their social function if they are completely free from outside control.

The Green Party supports:

- a. Alternative, community-based systems treating neither the artwork nor the artist as a commodity.
- b. Eliminating all laws that seek to restrict or censor artistic expression, including the withholding of government funds for political or moral content.
- c. Increased funding for the arts appropriate to their essential social role at local, state and federal levels of government.
- d. Community-funded programs employing local artists to enrich their communities through public art programs, including public performances, exhibitions, murals on public buildings, design or re-design of parks and public areas, storytelling and poetry reading, and publication.
- e. The establishment of non-profit public forums for local artists to display their talents and creations. Research, public dialogue, and trial experiments to develop alternative systems for the valuation and exchange of artworks and for the financial support of artists. Some examples include community subscriber support groups, artwork rental busts, cooperative support systems among artists, legal or financial incentives to donate to the arts or to donate artworks to public museums.
- f. Responsible choices of non-toxic, renewable, or recyclable materials. Funding sources not connected with social injustice or environmental destruction.
- g. Education programs in the community that will energize the creativity of every community member from the youngest to the oldest, including neglected groups such as teenagers, senior citizens, prisoners, immigrants, and drug addicts. These programs would provide materials and access to interested, qualified arts educators for every member of the community who demonstrates an interest.
- h. Funding and staffing to incorporate arts education into every school curriculum. We encourage local artists and the community to contribute time, experience, and resources to these efforts.
- i. Diversity in arts education in the schools including age-specific hands-on activities and appreciative theoretical approaches, exposure to the arts of various cultures and stylistic traditions, and experiences with a variety of media, techniques and contents.
- j. The integration of the arts and artistic teaching methods into other areas of the curriculum to promote a holistic perspective.

## F. Health Care



Health care is a human right, not a privilege.

The Green Party supports a wide range of health care services, not just traditional medicine that too often emphasizes high-tech intervention and surgical techniques.

The United States must respect the measures other nations take to ensure public health, and must not use medication, medical equipment, and other medical necessities, or threats of withholding them, as leverage for political reasons or as extortion for the sake of commercial profit. We oppose any embargo or economic sanction that would cause the suffering or death of civilians.

1. Medicare, which provides health care for over 40 million Americans, is at risk. We would vigorously pursue savings and cuts from abundant waste and fraud, eliminate unnecessary services that benefit providers more than patients, and rein in pharmaceutical industry price-gouging.
2. 70% to 85% of illness in America is due to unmanaged stress. This means that national measures to reduce work hours, promote cyber-commuting for work, and increased vacation time for workers will significantly improve the public's health. We advocate access for all, irrelevant of income, to stress management training such as meditation techniques, yoga, tai chi, qigong, and biofeedback.
3. A large percentage of illness is diet-related; therefore, improving the quality of our nation's food supply and our personal eating habits will lessen the strain on our health care system. We advocate subsidies for organic foods, as well as removing sugar/caffeine snacks from schools. This could save our nation as much as \$700 to \$850 billion of the \$1 trillion annual health costs.
4. We support the teaching of holistic health approaches and, as appropriate, the use of complementary and alternative therapies such as herbal medicines, homeopathy, acupuncture, and other healing approaches.
5. We call for wider implementation of hospice care.
6. We oppose the arrest, harassment or prosecution of anyone involved in any aspect of the production, cultivation, transportation, distribution or consumption of medicinal marijuana. We also oppose the harassment, prosecution or revocation of license of any health-care provider who gives a recommendation or prescription for medicinal marijuana.
7. We support informed consent laws to educate consumers to potential health impact of types of treatment. For truly informed consent, a professional must explain the limitations of his or her professional training, and make the patient aware of what other professionals could offer differently or in addition.
8. Primary care, through a renewed attention to family medicine as opposed to increased medical specialization, is necessary.
9. We unequivocally support a woman's right to reproductive choice, no matter her marital status or age, and that contraception and safe, legal abortion procedures be available on demand and be included in all health insurance coverage in the U.S., as well as free of charge in any state where a woman falls below the poverty level. [See section A.1. [Women's Rights on page 18](#) in this chapter]
10. Medical research must be increased, and alternative therapies actively sought, to combat diseases and eliminate their causes, especially cancer and HIV/AIDS.
11. We call for competent social and health services for those who have special needs: the mentally ill, the handicapped, and those who are terminally ill.
12. Public policy needs to move in the direction of a voluntary, community-based mental health system that safeguards human dignity, respects individual autonomy, and protects informed consent. A wide variety of humane, effective, and empowering alternative and complementary approaches should be available for anyone who experiences a psychiatric problem or mental disability.



# 1. Universal Health Care

The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world without a national health care system. The current system's high costs and widely recognized failures demand that bold steps be taken. The Green Party supports a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health insurance program as the only solution to the current disastrous for-profit system.

Under a universal national single-payer health care system, the administrative waste of private insurance corporations would be redirected to patient care. If the U.S. were to shift to a system of universal coverage and a single payer plan, as in Canada, the savings in administrative costs would be more than enough to offset the cost. Expenses for businesses currently providing coverage would be reduced. State and local governments would pay less because they would receive reimbursement for services provided to the previously uninsured, and because public programs would cease to be the “dumping ground” for high-risk patients and those rejected by HMOs when they become disabled and unemployed.

Most importantly, the people of America will gain the peace of mind in knowing that needed health care will always be available to them. No longer will people have to worry about facing financial disaster if they become seriously ill, are laid off their jobs, or are injured in an accident.

The Green Party supports a universal, comprehensive, national single-payer health plan that will provide the following with no increase in cost:

- a. A publicly funded health care insurance program, administered at the state and local levels.
- b. Lifetime benefits for everyone. No one will lose coverage for any reason.
- c. Freedom to choose the type of health care provider, with a wide range of health care choices.
- d. Decision-making in the hands of health providers and their patients.
- e. Comprehensive benefits, as good or better than existing plans, including dental, vision, mental health care, hospice, long-term care, substance abuse treatment and medication coverage.
- f. Participation of all licensed and/or certified health providers, subject to standards of practice in their field.
- g. Portable health plan benefits.
- h. Primary and preventive care as priorities, including wellness education about diet, nutrition and exercise.
- i. Greatly reduced paperwork for both patients and providers.
- j. Fair and full reimbursement to providers for their services.
- k. Preservation of all health care services currently available.
- l. Cost controls via streamlined administration, national fee schedules, bulk purchases of drugs and medical equipment, and coordination of capital expenditures. Prices of medications must be publicly supervised.
- m. Hospitals that can afford safe staffing levels for registered nurses.
- n. Establishment of national, state, and local Health Policy Boards consisting of health consumers and providers to oversee and evaluate the performance of the system, expand access to care, and determine research priorities. All meetings of the boards shall be open to the public.
- o. Establishment of a National Health Trust Fund that would channel all current Federal payments for health care programs directly into the Fund, in addition to employees' health premium payments.

## 2. AIDS/HIV

We call for comprehensive, humane, and competent care of all people with AIDS/HIV.

An all-out campaign must be waged against AIDS and HIV. The AIDS epidemic has not been adequately addressed at the local, state, federal, or international levels. All people in all countries, including those with AIDS/HIV, have a right to medical care, protection from discrimination, and confidentiality.

Drug corporations have a strong profit motivation to make this disease a manageable one (like diabetes) with guaranteed sales of very expensive drugs, in the billions of dollars every year. Drug companies have not emphasized research that targets a cure. While new drugs have dramatically saved lives, many have side effects so debilitating that the quality of life is poor, if not intolerable during the extended lifetime of the patient. But even these need to be produced generically to stop the devastation resulting from corporate refusal to provide these drugs to the millions dying throughout the world who cannot afford these basic lifesaving drugs. Drug researchers should have a cure for AIDS as their ultimate goal.

The Green Party calls for:

- a. Increased funding for AIDS education and patient care.
- b. Increased funding for comprehensive sex education that includes AIDS education.
- c. Increased funding for research focusing on a cure, methods of prevention, and on bolstering the immune system.
- d. Improved technology, facilities, laboratories, researchers, staff and personnel to cure AIDS/HIV. A "Manhattan Project" for a cure is required.
- e. Complete sharing of information between researchers, funding agencies (including corporations), and the public on AIDS/HIV before awarding the next research grant.
- f. More research into better methods of prevention of HIV infection. While we support condom use, better condoms are also required. We support more vaccine research.
- g. Equal access to AIDS education, treatment and medications for all affected. Accordingly, funding and accountability should be increased.
- h. Allowing all prisoners affected with AIDS/HIV in all countries to have the same access as free citizens to education, treatment, preventive measures (including condom use), and medical care.
- i. A uniform international definition of AIDS.
- j. Protecting the confidentiality of all people diagnosed with AIDS/HIV or tested for HIV.
- k. More careful and timely approval of effective AIDS drugs by the FDA.
- l. Production of affordable and available versions of patented medicines in all countries.
- m. Targeting the young for age-appropriate education about AIDS/HIV and appropriate methods of prevention. We support sex education and the distribution of condoms in schools.
- n. Prevention awareness and access to condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS. We condemn HIV-related discrimination.
- o. Make drug treatment and other programs available for all addicts who seek help.
- p. Expand clinical trials for treatments and vaccines.
- q. Speed-up the FDA drug approval process.
- r. Providing housing for homeless and poor people with AIDS/HIV.
- s. Providing treatment for homeless people with AIDS/HIV.
- t. Support for needle exchange programs and for programs to help drug addicts.
- u. No mandatory screening for AIDS/HIV; anonymous screening must be available.
- v. Lifting the ban prohibiting HIV positive people from entering the U.S. as visitors or as immigrants.



## G. Labor

The right to organize unions, bargain freely and strike when necessary is being destroyed by employers and their representatives in government. Today, nearly one out of ten workers involved in union organizing drives is illegally fired by employers who wage a campaign of fear, threats, and slick propaganda to keep workers from exercising a genuinely free choice.

And as union membership falls, so do the wages of all working people, union and non-union alike. We support efforts to overcome these legal handicaps, especially in the South and Southwest where the laws are most hostile. We also must dedicate ourselves to fighting for a complete overhaul of this country's labor laws.

1. We support the irreducible right of the working people in a company, without hindrance, to form a union and to bargain collectively with their employer. This right was guaranteed under The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1936.

Furthermore, we support the right of workers, without penalty, to inform other workers on the premises of a union being formed. This includes advertising and recruiting.

The 1936 Act has been eroded and diluted over the years by incremental infringements and restrictions, especially by the Taft- Hartley Act of 1947 (which includes the union shop) passed over President Truman's veto. We stand for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.

2. It is imperative that employees in a company or business enjoy workplace democracy, which includes the following:
  - ▷ The right to elect representatives to sit equally with management on the Board of Directors.
  - ▷ The right to fair and democratic elections of their own union officers.
  - ▷ No permanent replacement of striking workers.
  - ▷ No forced overtime.
  - ▷ Encourage flexible working schedules so employees can arrange our own time to deal with personal and family concerns
  - ▷ All workers, temporary or permanent, must be paid a living wage.
  - ▷ All workers must have health care coverage, at least half paid by employer, until the passage of universal health care.
  - ▷ All workers must have unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and access to a jobs search program when they are unemployed. This security applies to

farm workers as well.

- ▷ Require minimum pensions for all workers, fully vested and portable, that do not reduce social security benefits
  - ▷ Mediation must be the first available solution to labor-management disputes with an agreed-upon time limit.
  - ▷ New union members must have the right to submit a first contract to binding arbitration at the request of the union.
  - ▷ Labor has the first right to buy out a company that is for sale or is going bankrupt, or being outsourced to another state or another country.
  - ▷ We support a law requiring employers who purchase or merge with other companies to honor all existing collective bargaining agreements and contracts.
  - ▷ Labor has the right to stock ownership and oversight of the investment of its own funds in the company where it works.
3. We support the enactment of living wage laws that apply to all workers. A major consequence of this law will be the lessening of the ever-widening gap between CEOs' income and workers' pay.
  4. Agricultural and other excluded workers must be covered by federal labor laws, except where existing state laws offer more protection.
  5. We encourage cooperative ownership and management of enterprises whenever a buy-out is possible.
  6. We support day-care service offered at every workplace when feasible, or reasonably near-by when not feasible at the workplace.
  7. Management's unhindered right to close its workplace and move to a lower-pay locale must be circumscribed to the degree that it protects the local workforce and their job security.

8. We support the establishment of a reduced-hour work week and at least one month of vacation per year for all workers.
9. The ever-widening gap between rich and poor is destructive of democracy and creates an uneven playing field for economic opportunity. Public welfare that depends on hand-outs from the corporate rich reduces democracy by that same amount. Every citizen must have the leverage necessary to become a productive member of the economy and the society in which we live.
10. All workers have a right to a safe and humane working environment. A lack of adequate enforcement of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) laws and/or insufficient standards put many workers at risk.

We support the following safety policies:

- ▷ Protect and enforce OSHA laws. We insist on adequate testing of equipment and funding of enforcement procedures.
  - ▷ Inform workers of workplace hazards. Employers have a responsibility to protect workers from those hazards.
  - ▷ Legislate full funding for worker safety programs at both the state and federal levels.
  - ▷ Insist on agricultural practices that don't endanger farm workers. Put agricultural practices under the jurisdiction of OSHA.
11. We stand firmly opposed to privatization and contracting-out of public services. A government that works for us would provide critical goods and services that should not be run for profit.



## H. Criminal Justice

Our criminal justice system is inhumane, ineffective, and prohibitively expensive. The breaking of the bonds of community and the economic and social root causes of crime must be addressed. Retribution has replaced rehabilitation. Prison terms are becoming longer, and we are building more prisons. The majority of prisoners are serving terms for minor property and drug crimes or violations of their conditions of parole or probation. Poor and under-educated minorities are over-represented in the prison population.

The effects of imprisonment are largely negative. Prisoners are increasingly isolated from the communities they came from and are often denied contact with the outside world or the media. Access to educational and legal materials is disappearing. Boredom and hopelessness prevail. The United States has the highest recidivism rate of any industrialized country. Rape is a serious problem in prison. The increasingly widespread privatization of prisons renders some prisoners virtual corporate slaves.

Law enforcement is placing too much emphasis on drug-related and petty street crimes, and not enough on prosecution of corporate, white collar, and environmental crimes. Defrauding someone of their life savings is the same as robbery. Spraying pesticides while workers are in the fields, negligently maintaining dangerous workplaces that result in death or maiming, or dumping toxic substances should be treated the same as other crimes.

At the same time, we must develop a firm approach to law enforcement that directly addresses violent crime, including trafficking in hard drugs. Violence that creates a climate of further violence must be stopped.

Police brutality has reached epidemic levels in the United States and we call for effective monitoring of police agencies to eliminate police brutality.

We support a citizen's right of access to justice. Our system of justice must be made convenient to rich and poor alike, guarding it against big business' attempts to regulate and, in effect, control our civil justice/civil jury system.

The Green Party proposes the following policies:

## Alternatives to Incarceration

1. Any attempt to combat crime must begin with restoration of community. We encourage positive approaches that build hope, responsibility and a sense of belonging. Prisons should be the sentence of last resort, reserved for violent criminals. Those convicted of non-violent offenses should be handled by other programs including halfway houses, electronic monitoring, work-furlough, community service and restitution programs. Substance abuse should be addressed as a medical problem requiring treatment, not imprisonment, and a failed drug test should not result in revocation of parole. Incarcerated prisoners of the drug war should be release to the above programs.
2. Prisons are presently serving some of the population formerly held in the mental health system. Ninety-five percent of those who commit suicide in jail or prison have a diagnosed mental disorder. Mentally ill prisoners need separate psychiatric facilities providing psychological and medical care, rehabilitation, and release to appropriate community mental health facilities.
3. The aging of our prison population will lead to huge needless expenditures in the next decade. Prisoners too old and those too infirm to be a threat to society should be released to less expensive, community-based facilities.
4. Juvenile offenders must not be housed in needlessly restrictive settings. They must never be housed with adults. Their education must continue while in custody. A single judge and a single caseworker should be assigned to oversee each juvenile's placement and progress in the juvenile justice system.
5. Our parole system is a failure. Reduction of recidivism should be a goal of parole. Parole should be treated as a time of reintegration into the community, not as a continuation of a person's sentence. Parolees need community reentry programs before release. Paroled prisoners should have access to education, drug treatment, psychological treatment, job training, work and housing. Their persons and homes should not be subject to search without reasonable cause. Appropriate services should also be available to the members of a parolee's family, to help them with the changes caused by the parolee's return.
6. We call for more funding for rape and domestic violence prevention and education programs, and stiffer sentences for people convicted of domestic violence.

## Prison Conditions

7. Private prisons should be illegal. Corrections Corporation of America ranks among the top five performing companies on the New York Stock Exchange during the late 1990's, and operates the sixth largest prison system in the country. These prisons treat people as their product, and provide far worse service than government-run prisons. Profits are derived from understaffing, which severely reduces the acceptable care of inmates.
8. Prison conditions must be humane and sanitary and should include heat, light, exercise, clothing, nutrition, libraries, possessions, and personal safety. Prisoners are entitled to psychological, drug, and medical treatment, including access to condoms and uninterrupted access to all prescribed medication. Isolation of prisoners from staff and one another should be minimal and only as needed for safety.
9. Prison officials must institute and enforce policies that discourage racism, sexism, and homophobia in prison. End racially segregated housing.
10. The First Amendment rights of prisoners must not be revoked. Prisoners have the right to talk to journalists, write letters, publish their own writings, and become legal experts on their own cases.
11. Encourage all prisoners to have the opportunity to obtain a G.E.D. (high school equivalency diploma) and higher education. Inmates who earn a diploma have a recidivism rate of 10%, compared with 60% for other inmates.
12. Prisons should be community-based where possible. Where they are not, transportation for visits should be made available and subsidized. Unless the reason for imprisonment indicates otherwise, parents should have access to their children if it is in the interest of the child.
13. Incarcerated individuals should retain the right to vote by absentee ballot in the district of their domicile, and should retain the right to vote during parole. [See section B. [Political Participation on page 9](#) in chapter I]
14. We support the reinstatement of voting rights and the right to hold public office to ex-felons who have completed their prison sentence.

## Legislation

15. Establish programs to strengthen self-help and community action through neighborhood centers that provide well-funded legal aid, alternative dispute-resolution practices, mediated restitution, community team policing, and local crisis/assault care shelters.

16. Establish elected or appointed independent civilian review boards with subpoena power to investigate complaints about prison guard and community police behavior.
17. Maximize restrictions on police use of weapons and restraining techniques such as pepper spray, stun belts, and choke holds.
18. Abolish the death penalty.
19. Repeal state "Three Strikes" laws. Restore judicial discretion in sentencing, as opposed to mandatory sentencing.
20. Freedom on bail must be the right of all defendants charged with non-violent crimes. Mental health and social services should be incorporated in the bail agreement. Laws giving prosecutors the power to deny defendants the right to remain free on bail must be repealed.
21. Stop forfeiture of the property of unconvicted suspects. It is state piracy and denial of due process.
22. Implement a moratorium on prison construction. The funds saved should be used for alternatives to incarceration.
23. Compensation for jurors should be increased and child care provided for those serving on a jury. Employers should be encouraged to continue paying an employees' wages while they serve.
24. Thoughtful, carefully considered gun control laws such as the "Brady Bill" and the waiting period for record search before gun dealers may sell a gun should be supported.
25. Enact tough DWI (driving while intoxicated) laws.
26. A consistent policy of protection against violence in schools should be developed and enforced.
27. Victims' rights must be guarded and protected. Victim-impact statements are a method for achieving full justice, and restitution should be considered in many cases.
28. We call for decriminalization of victimless crimes. For example, the possession of small amounts of marijuana.
29. We call for legalization of industrial hemp and all its many uses.
30. We call for an end to the "war on drugs." We support expanded drug counseling and treatment.



## I. Population

Humans have a unique responsibility for stewardship of the Earth. No species, especially on the upper end of the food chain, can have unchecked exponential growth without depleting the Earth's carrying capacity — human population expands at the expense of other species.

Limiting the discussion to population numbers and birthrates diverts attention from over-consumption in the industrial world and historic patterns of exploitation of developing countries. Consumption-oriented lifestyles that have evolved in the industrial world have resulted in a minority of people consuming a majority of resources. This is as significant a threat to the Earth's carrying capacity as the high birth rates in low-consumption countries.

Current global demographics demonstrate that economic well-being promotes low birthrates. Any discussion of population must also be a discussion of women throughout the world. There is documented evidence that the economic and social status of women is a primary factor in birthrates — when women have control over their lives, birthrates decrease. Also, a major barrier to the improvement of women's reproductive health is a lack of shared responsibility between men and women in family planning. A combination of male attitudes and cultural traditions have resulted in most men being under-educated and uninvolved in the planning of their families.

Globally, human population is increasing while food production has leveled off. When population increases faster than the economy grows, the disparity between rich and poor also increases. Higher human consumption rates and populations increase the pressure on the environment in every ecological problem area.

1. Those living in the industrialized world must end the habits of waste and over-consumption that place as much stress on the environment as does population growth in developing nations.
2. We must remove the political and economic barriers that prevent women around the world from having all the resources necessary to become skilled family planners.
3. Funds must be allocated for expanded scientific research into safer and more effective birth control techniques and devices. We demand better-than-adequate health care for women and children--especially prenatal care. [See section

D.[Foreign Policy on page 11](#) in chapter I and section A.1.[Women's Rights on page 18](#) in this chapter]

4. There must be access to free birth control devices, information counseling, and clinics to all who desire them. We call for implementation of family planning education for both genders in all levels of the state school system. [See section D.[Foreign Policy on page 11](#) in chapter I and section A.1.[Women's Rights on page 18](#) in this chapter]
5. We must promote new traditions and images of men becoming fully involved in all aspects of the family planning process.

## J. Free Speech and Media Reform



The Green Party seeks to improve the role mass media plays in political and daily life by encouraging the diversification of programming and news coverage, and increasing access to the mass media.

Free speech and free press are constitutionally and politically guaranteed rights. Democracy requires a wide variety of opinions and information, which is not currently provided by corporate controlled media outlets. The Green Party calls for the establishment of citizen initiated and controlled radio and television stations. These citizen-managed media networks would be financed by requiring corporations to pay for the right to use our publicly owned air waves. Mechanisms must be established to prevent political manipulation and exploitation of this essential and valuable resource, so that all citizens are adequately informed.

The Green Party supports:

1. Returning ownership and control of the electromagnetic spectrum to the public. We urge the public to *reclaim the public airwaves*. The privatization of the broadcast airwaves — one of our most important taxpayer assets — has caused serious deformations of our politics and culture.
2. The problem is that private broadcasters control what the public owns. In return for free licenses to use taxpayer property, broadcasters give us a steady stream of increasingly coarse, redundant, superficial programming, and exclusively decide who says what on our public airwaves.
3. Market-priced leasing of any for-profit use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
4. Reasonable restriction on media consolidation, using a public interest standard.
5. Restoring of full public funding of the National Public Broadcasting System to provide in-depth coverage of issues and the widest possible range of viewpoints.
6. Community ownership of broadcast outlets and public oversight of licensing.
7. Free and equal airtime for political candidates on radio and television networks. [See section

A.[Political Reform on page 8](#) in chapter I]

8. Taxing electronic advertising sales to fund democratic media outlets.
9. The repeal of the Telecommunications Act of 1996.
10. The prohibition of commercial advertising in public places such as schools, parks, and governmental buildings.
11. Developing community radio, particularly those rule-making petitions before the FCC that allow for a new service of small, locally-owned FM stations.
12. Limiting the concentration of power that has characterized the telecommunications industry. We need a wide span of programming and information, genuine citizen access, diversity of views, respect for local community interests, news, public affairs and quality children's programming. The FCC should closely monitor applications for license renewals to the public airwaves to ensure that these public interest criteria are met.
13. Opposing censorship in the arts, media (including the World Wide Web and Internet), and press. We encourage individual and social responsibility by artists, creative media, writers and all citizens.



## K. Immigration / Emigration

We must never forget that we are a nation of immigrants, a rich tapestry of nationalities, races, religions and creeds who have come together to forge a new, classless society based on equality of opportunity and the individual freedoms and inalienable rights protected by our Constitution.

While it would be ideal to erase borders between countries, that would be impractical without reciprocity between nations. We seek that reciprocity as a practical goal. While we recognize that there must be some controls on immigration, if only for the sake of national security, the Green Party would endorse a friendlier (less intimidating) attitude towards immigration in all nations within certain guidelines.

The Green Party must consider immigration issues from an international standpoint, taking into account international labor and environmental standards, and human rights.

1. Preferential quotas based on race, class, and ideology should be abandoned for immigration policies that promote fairness, non-discrimination and family reunification.
2. We support policies that reflect our constitutional guarantees of freedoms of speech, association, and travel.
3. Particular attention should be given to those minorities who are political exiles and refugees.
4. Our relationship with our neighbor to the south, Mexico, needs to be given added attention due to the special historical and cultural relation it has with the southwest portion of the United States. Our border relations and reciprocal economic opportunities should be a central concern of a government that is looking to improved economic, environmental, and social conditions for both peoples.
5. The Green Party calls for permanent border passes to all citizens of Mexico and Canada whose identity can be traced and verified. Work permits for citizens of Mexico and Canada must be easily obtainable, thereby decriminalizing the act of gainful employment. This action would help eliminate exploitation of undocumented persons by criminals engaged in human contraband (*coyotes*) and unethical employers. It would also help ensure that taxes will be paid in each corresponding nation per its laws. These measures will also help temporary residents from Mexico and Canada to secure driving privileges and liability insurance.
6. Labor laws must be adjusted to take into account seasonal foreign workers. Employers must provide full rights to wages and health benefits to immigrant workers who make voluntary contributions to pension plans and pay Social Security taxes.
7. We advocate an end to employer sanctions, which have been shown to hurt not only undocumented workers but also U.S.-born workers (especially those of color). A fair and equitable legalization program will provide equal access to working people of all nationalities, not tied to a specific employer or guest worker program. Programs involving temporary worker status must include the option of permanent residency for immigrants already in the U.S. and protection of migrant worker savings.
8. Greens oppose “English-only” legislation. We would advocate legislation to ensure that federal funds marked for communities to provide ESL (english as second language) training, and health and social support services to immigrants actually go to them. When funds are spent in other areas, immigrants are being deprived of benefits that they earn as productive workers in their communities.
9. We oppose the use of racial profiling. We are concerned about reports of illegal raids and traffic stops based on ethnic appearance and not probable cause of a traffic violation. We would further advocate funding or education programs designed to reduce racism and bias against ethnic minorities. [See section A. 2. [Racial Discrimination on page 20](#) in this chapter]
10. We advocate adoption of certification standards for translators.
11. We oppose those who seek to divide us for political gain by raising ethnic and racial hatreds, and by blaming immigrants for social and economic problems.





# L. Housing and Homelessness

Housing is one of the basic necessities of life, yet too many people can no longer afford adequate shelter. Government should play an activist role in the availability of housing.

Rents have soared due to real estate speculation. One out of five renters pays more than fifty percent of their income for housing. Fewer than one in ten renters can afford to buy a median-priced house in the area where they live. In an era of deregulation, tenants have had few legal protections, and those that exist have begun to erode. Rent control and eviction protection for tenants does not exist in most jurisdictions, and where it does, it is usually inadequate and under attack. Landlords who, in violation of housing code requirements, fail to keep their property in habitable condition are tolerated, or at most given lenient penalties. Housing discrimination remains rampant against people of color, immigrants, disabled, single people, gays and lesbians, and families with children.

It is conservatively estimated that one million people are homeless. Today, homeless people are hounded, threatened, and often can not obtain badly needed services. Though affordable housing could help alleviate the problem of homelessness, the homeless have needs that go beyond housing.

The twenty-year decline in real wages for workers is also a major contribution to the current crisis in housing availability and affordability. Certain laws have also contributed to the problems of housing supply and cost, and are in some cases consciously used to exclude households with lower incomes from higher income communities.

Areas of local law that should be revisited include: ordinances that prohibit a shift toward co-housing; land use plans that provide excessive amounts of land for industrial and commercial use; and inflexible building codes that prevent alternative (often less expensive) construction approaches that still meet health and safety requirements.

The Green Party recognizes housing as a human right, and will work toward eliminating economic and other forms of discrimination in the construction and use of housing through the following policies:

## Renter's Rights

1. Protect tenants with rent control laws, including vacancy control.
2. Prevent evictions without just cause. Restrict owner move-in evictions of long-term tenants, the elderly, and disabled persons.
3. Crack down on landlords who refuse to maintain their properties in habitable condition, or who engage in illegal evictions, with hefty fines and, in extreme cases, jail terms.

## Increase Affordable Housing Supply

4. Enforce laws against illegal hotel conversions.
5. Use vacant housing — whether at closed military bases, housing kept off the market by speculators, or landlords delinquent in taxes — to shelter homeless persons.
6. Build human-scale, low income housing (as does Habitat for Humanity).
7. Pursue more efficient use of our existing housing supply, such as home-sharing and cooperative conversions of existing dwellings.

8. Subsidies, trade-offs with developers, and the creative use of city and county zoning ordinances should be used to increase affordable housing.

## Measures to Help Homeless Persons

9. Expand community-based services for homeless persons and make them more readily available.
10. Repeal all laws that criminalize any facet of homelessness or helping homeless persons.
11. Abolish anti-sleeping laws, especially in areas which don't have adequate open space, shelter and sleeping areas for homeless persons.
12. Strictly enforce all the laws that are designed to provide for the homeless, such as the laws that require opening National Guard armories to homeless persons during inclement weather.
13. Allow homeless people to take part in decisions about long- and short-term solutions to their situation.
14. Strengthen and increase funding of mental health and drug rehabilitation systems.

### **Strong Fair-Housing Laws**

15. Strengthen and enforce fair-housing laws against discrimination based on race, sex, familial status (children), marital status, disability, or sexual orientation.
16. Fully fund the Fair Employment and Housing Commission and provide generous government funding to non-profit organizations engaged in fair housing monitoring and enforcement.
17. Insist that architectural review boards and planning commissions represent the concerns of citizens, rather than the concerns of economic segments of the community.

### **Reform Zoning and Building Codes**

18. Implement low-impact, site-specific designs that encourage human-scale development and

environmentally sensitive planning. Promote development that encourages urban density — with green spaces — and that discourages urban sprawl.

19. Remove restrictions on converting large, single family homes to multi-family use. Families of today are smaller and there are more single-parent households.
20. Allow industrial and commercial developers to provide housing instead of parking spaces in new developments, and permit housing development in existing industrial and commercial zones.
21. Reform zoning, occupancy, and building ordinances so that residential needs can exist in balance with commercial and industrial needs, and so that alternative approaches are encouraged rather than restricted.

# III. ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

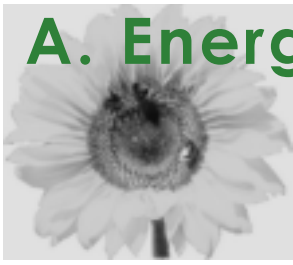
The human community is an element of the Earth community, not the other way around. All human endeavors are situated within the dynamics of the biosphere. If we wish to have sustainable institutions and enterprises, they must fit well with the processes of the Earth. The ideology of industrialism, in both capitalist and communist countries, insists that modern society lives on top of nature and should rightly use and despoil the rest of the natural world as we desire—because any loss of the ecosystems is merely an “externality” in economic thought and because any problems can be addressed later by a technological fix. We are now living through the painful consequences of that arrogant, ignorant perspective. Many of our children suffer from accumulations of mercury and other toxins in their neurological systems, environmentally related cancer is on the rise, and our air and water are increasingly polluted. Meanwhile, our ecosystems are being compromised by the spreading presence of genetically engineered organisms.

Our houses and buildings, manufacturing processes, and industrial agriculture were all designed with the assumption of an endless supply of cheap and readily available fossil fuels. Pollution and despoiling the land were not part of the thinking. The Green Party, however, is optimistic about the alternatives that now exist and that could be encouraged through tax policy and the market incentives of fuel efficiency. We also challenge the grip of the oil, automotive, and automobile insurance industries that have managed to block or roll back progress in public mass transit. The gutting of subsidies for the railroads has meant not only fewer passenger routes but also the addition of thousands of large freight trucks on our highways, decreasing public safety and increasing pollution. We are committed to extending the greening of waste management by encouraging the spread of such practices as *reduce, return, reuse, and recycle*. We strongly oppose the recent attempts to roll back the federal environmental protection laws that safeguard our air, water, and soil.

The health of the life-support systems—the ecosystems on our continent—is of paramount importance. Inherent in the efficient dynamics of those ecosystems is a vital profusion of biodiversity. Therefore, the Greens call for a halt to the destruction of habitats, which are being sacrificed to unqualified economic expansion. We humans have a moral responsibility to *all* of our relations, many of which are facing extinction because we carelessly and permanently halt their long evolutionary journey.

The Green Party also supports the spread of organic agriculture and the careful tending of our nation’s precious remaining topsoil. We support planetary efforts to slow the ever-increasing numbers of humans pressuring the ecosystems, and we especially support the reduction of consumption of the world’s raw materials by the industrialized Northern Hemisphere. We are appalled by our country’s withdrawal from serious efforts to limit greenhouse gases that are contributing mightily to global climate disruption. The Green Party strongly urges the United States to adopt an actively responsible position in this crisis and to take significant action to address the problem.

# A. Energy



Our energy use and abuse is at the core of many environmental and even social problems. With less than 5% of the world's population, the U.S. consumes more than 25% of the world's oil, gas, and electricity. Major damage to land, air and water around the world has resulted from such industries as mining, drilling, transportation, pipelines, and generation of toxic and radioactive wastes. Our oil and gas addiction in particular has led to wars and human rights abuses in many countries.

We advocate strong energy policies at all levels of government to shift decisively away from polluting energy systems towards reduced energy use and clean energy sources.

We oppose energy utility deregulation. We support strong protections for electricity and natural gas consumers. These protections can only occur in a locally-controlled, fully regulated energy system that directly links generation with transmission and distribution. We recognize that deregulation and its reliance on markets — as opposed to state-based regulations — is incapable of providing affordable, reliable and clean energy. We support state efforts to regain control over electricity by establishing democratic, public control systems to locally coordinate supply and demand and by eliminating energy trading. Consumers deserve full disclosure of the specific electric generating facilities used to produce their electricity. We support net-metering to make decentralized energy production economically viable.

Energy management must be governed by the principle of *conservation, efficiency, and clean renewables*. Of highest importance is to use less, then to use wisely, and to have clean production of what is used. We advocate strong public policies to widely deploy conservation, efficiency, and clean renewable energy technologies. Examples include tax credits, renewable portfolio standards, research programs, loans and grants. Existing policies that currently benefit nuclear power, combustion technologies or large hydroelectric dams should be eliminated and reallocated to conservation, efficiency, wind and solar power.

## Conservation and Efficiency

1. Extensive conservation measures will bring huge resource savings for both the economy and the environment. Europe already consumes less than half of the electricity consumed per capita in the U.S. We call for extensive energy conservation efforts, with a goal of reducing energy consumption by 50% in 20 years.
2. We support efforts to decentralize regional electric grids by promoting energy efficiency and localized clean renewable energy. Tax-exempt bonds should be authorized to finance public ownership of utilities and to allow publicly owned utilities to finance conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy projects.

## Clean Renewables

3. The U.S. is blessed with tremendous renewable energy potential, enough to meet the entire electric demand of the country. We call for a Manhattan Project-level of commitment to developing clean renewable energy technologies — technologies that do not create pollution in the course of generating electricity. These can include wind, solar, ocean power, geothermal, and small-scale hydro. Since even

clean renewable energy can have negative environmental impacts, care must be taken to minimize such impacts. Clean renewable energy does *not* include nuclear power, any sort of combustion or process in which by-products are ultimately combusted, or hydroelectric dams that block entire rivers.

4. The Green Party calls for federal commitment to the mass-production of cheap, non-toxic solar photovoltaic technology to enable widespread deployment of solar power. To make solar more cost-competitive, we support large-scale government purchases of solar cells for installation on government facilities.
5. We support efforts of individuals and institutions to voluntarily purchase wind and solar power products through tradable renewable energy certificates. However, there are limits to the volunteer, market-based approach to promoting clean energy. Just as we cannot expect that individual purchases of organic food will cause all food production to become organic, we cannot expect that voluntary approaches will be sufficient to fully replace current energy supplies with clean energy, since only a tiny percentage of the energy supply can be affected by a volunteer purchasing approach.

## Fuels for Transportation and Heating

- Oil and gas are the primary fuels used for transportation and heating. U.S. dependence on oil and gas has driven an unparalleled assault on the global environment and on human rights in many nations. We call for major reductions in fuel consumption as we prepare for a fuel system based on clean hydrogen production and the use of fuel cells.
- We support the use of hydrogen as an energy storage medium, which makes it possible to operate a decentralized grid on intermittent energy generation methods, such as solar and wind. Fuel cells (using hydrogen sourced from water and separated by electrolysis with power provided by clean, renewable energy technologies) should be used to efficiently distribute electricity as needed. We oppose the use of nuclear technologies or carbon-based feedstocks for hydrogen production.
- We oppose the development of environmentally-destructive “alternative” fuels produced from unsustainable or toxic feedstocks, such as genetically-engineered crops, coal, or waste streams contaminated with persistent toxins.
- With regard to heating fuels, we support building codes for new construction that incorporate the best available energy conservation designs. New construction should be required to achieve substantial portions of its heating energy from the sun. For existing homes and buildings, we support programs to aid in their weatherization and increased energy efficiency.
- We oppose further oil and gas drilling or exploration on our nation's outer continental shelf, on our public lands, in the Rocky Mountains, and under the Great Lakes.



## B. Nuclear Issues

- The Green Party recognizes that there is no such thing as nuclear waste “disposal.” All six of the “low-level” nuclear waste dumps in the United States have leaked. There are no technological quick fixes that can effectively isolate nuclear waste from the biosphere for the duration of its hazardous life. Therefore, it is essential that generation of additional nuclear wastes be stopped.
- The Green Party calls for the early retirement of nuclear power reactors as soon as possible (in no more than five years), and for a phase-out of other technologies that use or produce nuclear waste. These technologies include non-commercial nuclear reactors, reprocessing facilities, nuclear waste incinerators, food irradiators, and all commercial and military uses of depleted uranium.
- Current methods of underground storage are a danger to present and future generations. Any nuclear waste management strategies must be above ground, continuously monitored, and they must minimize transportation of wastes.
- The Green Party strongly opposes any shipment of high-level nuclear waste across the to the proposed Nevada waste repository at Yucca Mountain, or any other centralized facility. The Green Party believes that this proposal is part of a move to re-fire a fast-track, commercial nuclear industry by providing a means for “safe disposal.” We deny there is such a thing as safe disposal of nuclear waste.  
  
We propose making spent reactor fuel and other high level wastes safer by vitrification at the site where it is produced or now stored.
- We call for cancellation of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, the nation's first weapons complex nuclear dump in southern New Mexico.
- We call for independent, public-access radiation monitoring at all nuclear facilities.
- We support applicable environmental impact statements and National Environmental Policy Act analysis with citizen participation at all nuclear sites.
- We support an immediate and intensive campaign to educate the public about nuclear problems, including disposal, clean-up, and long-term dangers.
- We oppose the export of nuclear technologies or their wastes to other nations.

10. We oppose public subsidies for nuclear power, including Price-Anderson insurance caps and stranded cost recovery bailouts.
11. We oppose the development and use of new nuclear reactors, plutonium (MOX) fuel, nuclear fuel reprocessing, nuclear fusion, uranium enrichment, and the manufacturing of new plutonium pits for a new generation of nuclear weapons.
12. We oppose the deregulation of radioactive materials and wastes, which is allowing such wastes to be recycled into consumer products and to enter municipal waste landfills and incinerators. We call for the strict regulation, tracking, monitoring, and recapturing of radioactive materials and wastes.
13. We call on the military to clean up depleted uranium contamination from testing ranges and battlefields, and to fully compensate exposed veterans and civilians who have been affected by depleted uranium exposure in the U.S. and elsewhere.



## C. Transportation

The Green Party supports a transportation policy that emphasizes the use of mass transit and alternatives to the automobile and truck for transport. We call for major public investment in mass transportation, so that such systems are cheap or free to the public and are safe, accessible, and easily understandable to first-time users.

We need ecologically sound forms of transportation that minimize pollution and maximize energy efficiency. Surfaces impermeable to rainwater, polluted storm run-off; paved over or polluted wetlands, the heat island effect, air pollution, and acid rain are all directly related to a transportation system run amuck.

Massive subsidies to the auto and fossil fuel industries, as well as an unworkable approach by urban planners, maintain the auto's dominance of our cityscapes. The present-day approach of upgrading streets to accommodate increased traffic generates new traffic because access is now easier, and people will now take jobs further from their homes or purchase homes further from their jobs. Some people shift from public transit to private cars due to the trip time in cars being shorter. As patronage for public transit decreases, public transit loses funding, becomes less viable, and service deteriorates thus encouraging even more people to use their cars.

To counteract these trends and reduce auto use, the Green Party advocates the following strategies:

### Pedestrians and Bicyclists

1. Make streets, neighborhoods and commercial districts more pedestrian friendly.
2. Increase the greenery of streets.
3. Utilize traffic-calming methods, where the design of streets promotes safe speeds and safe interaction with pedestrians. Create auto-free zones.
4. Develop extensive networks of bikeways, bicycle lanes and paths. Include bike racks on all public transit.
5. Maintain free community bicycle fleets, and provide necessary support for cyclists.

### Mass Transit

6. Redirect resources that currently go to enhancing auto capacity into expanding human-scale transit options.

7. Develop affordable mass transit systems that are more economical to use than private vehicles.
8. Encourage employer subsidies of transit commuter tickets for employees, funded by government Congestion Management grants.
9. Use existing auto infrastructure for transit expansion where possible. Light rail could be established in expressway medians through metropolitan high density corridors.
10. Include land use decisions in transportation issues, with consideration of the need for mass transit to have a market and be viable, and with attention paid to cross-commuting — the practice of people commuting to a place where they could and should live.
11. Expand our country's network of rail lines, including high speed regional passenger service.

## Automobiles

12. Place a moratorium on highway widening then use the money for mass transit and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
13. Mandate HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) lanes on freeways, and lower toll fees for carpools.
14. Discourage unnecessary auto use by eliminating free parking in non-residential areas well served by mass transit, and establish preferential parking rates for HOV.
15. Substantially increase the taxes on gasoline, but allow some compensation for low income drivers.
16. Support ambitious increases in motor vehicle fuel efficiency, including the use of hybrid electric designs. Legislate a "gas guzzler" tax on new vehicles that get a lower MPG than the CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) standards and offer "gas sipper" rebates for vehicles that get a higher MPG.
17. Schedule an increase in CAFE standards to 60 MPG for cars and 45 MPG for light trucks by the year 2010.
18. Develop and market to the general public fuel efficient cars as well as solar, electric and other non-fossil fuel powered vehicles for local travel. Support government procurement of high

efficiency motor vehicles. Electric components of vehicles should not be put "on the grid" while we still have polluting electricity generation sources providing power to that grid.

19. Encourage carpooling programs, telecommuting, and other creative solutions to reduce commuter traffic congestion. We advocate fair buy-backs of the most polluting and least efficient vehicles to remove them from the road.

## Air Travel

20. Make airports accessible by local transit systems.
21. Legislate further incremental reductions in airplane noise and air pollution.
22. Emphasize the use of light and heavy rail for freight transportation.

## Freight

23. We call for incentives to get long-distance truck hauling off of our highways and on to railways. We favor the removal of any administrative impediments to efficient long-haul freight transport by rail. Time is lost when switching goods from one railroad to another, even when the trains are the same size and gauge, and this waste can be eliminated.

# D. Waste Management



The Green Party advocates a shift away from the wasteful use of materials and towards an industrial system based on clean production and principles of zero waste.

1. We support toxics-use reduction and green chemistry to reduce the amounts of toxic chemicals in production processes, and to replace them with less- or non-toxic alternatives. we call for the phasing out of toxic metals, persistent organic pollutants, persistent bio-accumulative toxins, synthetic petrochemicals, and all avoidable uses of halogenated chemicals.
2. We support clean production methods so that products are designed to be durable, repairable, reusable, recyclable, and energy-efficient, using non-toxic, sustainably-obtained materials, and nonpolluting production methods.
3. We support making manufacturers responsible for the full life cycle of their products by taking back used packaging and products for remanufacturing, reuse, or recycling. The electronics industry in particular must redesign its products to eliminate toxic components and

enable clean recycling. We support the Principles of Extended Producer Responsibility ([www.grrn.org/epr/epr\\_principles.html](http://www.grrn.org/epr/epr_principles.html)), as outlined by the EPR Working Group of the Grassroots Recycling Network. Policies to assist this transition include bans, recycled content standards, and economic incentives such as taxation, special fees, and deposits.

4. The precautionary principle should be applied when introducing a technology (chemicals, industrial facilities, products, etc.) raises the threat of harm to human health or the environment. In such cases, needs assessments and alternatives assessments must be conducted with full public participation. Affected communities must hold decision-making power over technology deployment.
5. The public has a right to know what toxic or potentially toxic chemicals are used and released

- in their communities, and in products that they might purchase or use.
6. Corporations should be held strictly liable for the consequences of the pollution they produce. We support the Citizens' Platform on Superfund, as adopted at the 1995 Communities At Risk Superfund Summit in Washington, DC ([www.ccaej.org/projects/platform.htm](http://www.ccaej.org/projects/platform.htm)). We call on the EPA to end the use of incineration as a cleanup technology, and to ensure that "cleanups" don't simply relocate the toxic mess to chemical waste dumps in poor communities of color.
  7. We support the Principles of Environmental Justice as outlined by the 1991 National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit ([www.ejnet.org/ej/platform.html](http://www.ejnet.org/ej/platform.html)).
  8. We call for the shut-down of existing waste incinerators, a moratorium on new waste incinerators, and a phase-out of landfills. For all possible waste streams, we support the following strategies (in order of priority) as alternatives to incineration and landfills:
    - ▷ Toxics use reduction
    - ▷ Source reduction, reuse, clean recycling or composting/digestion
    - ▷ Neutralization/sterilization/detoxification methods where applicable
  9. No wastes containing toxic or radioactive contaminants should be deregulated, which allows them to be used in "beneficial use" schemes as fertilizer, co-products, or fuels; or by recycling them into consumer products or disposing them as municipal waste.
  10. We oppose the exportation, under any circumstances, of chemicals that are prohibited in the United States. We oppose shipping of toxic, hazardous, or radioactive wastes across national borders, and the shipment of such wastes without strict regulation across any political borders. Waste should not be considered a tradable commodity under the Interstate Commerce Clause.
  11. Nature uses and reuses everything through continual recycling. We should pattern our use of resources after nature in sustainable cycles. The Green Party would:
    - ▷ Create a market for recycled goods through legal and tax incentives.
    - ▷ Institute convenient curbside recycling (including yard clippings) in all urban areas.
    - ▷ Manufacture recycled paper, labeled as such, out of a specific percentage of post-consumer waste paper.
    - ▷ Rapidly phase out composites and other materials that cannot be recycled.
    - ▷ Educate our children on the benefits of recycling.
    - ▷ Simplify procedures that let people choose not to receive junk mail.
    - ▷ Legislate deposits on glass, metal, and plastic beverage containers.
    - ▷ Legislate limitations in packaging and impose penalties for wasteful packaging.
    - ▷ Legislate in favor of recycling used tires, and against burning of tires (tire-derived fuels) in manufacturing.
    - ▷ Remove obstacles to the sale of items in bulk, and standardize containers to make their reuse easier.
    - ▷ Restructure garbage rates to encourage reduction in the volume of waste.
    - ▷ Design and produce high quality goods that are durable, repairable and, then, recyclable at the end of their useful life; this concept is the opposite of the current planned obsolescence.





## E. Clean Air / Greenhouse Effect / Ozone Depletion

The strict, comprehensive protections of the Clean Air Act must be maintained and enhanced if we are to keep in place effective federal programs that deal with urban smog, toxic air pollution, acid rain, and ozone depletion. State and local clean air initiatives should advance and improve national efforts. For example, moving forward with stricter clean air and fuel efficiency standards, and with vehicle and fleet conversions.

Earth's atmosphere is in great danger due to man-made chemicals and hydrocarbon emissions. Chloro-fluorocarbons, hydrochloro-fluorocarbons, and other related ozone-depleting substances should be banned as soon as is possible.

The Green Party urges the U.S. Congress to act immediately to address the critical global warming and climate change issues. When the U.S. Senate voted 95-to-0 to oppose any global warming treaty that does not also bind developing countries to specific, if smaller, carbon emissions reductions in the future, which many industrializing countries oppose, it put a roadblock in the way of progress by all nations.

With only 4% of the earth's people, the United States produces more than 20% of carbon emissions. From 1990 to 1996, total U.S. emissions grew by an amount equal to what Brazil and Indonesia produce every year. Per capita, the United States emits 85% more than Germany, twice as much as England and Japan, and currently nearly 10-times as much as China.

Climate change presents very real economic and social opportunities for new and sustainable jobs from new energy technologies, including both energy efficiency and renewables. Yet, too often, the focus of debate has been only on the pain of adjustment to carbon reductions. This is because of the influence of multinational business on government policies.

We must implement the following policies if we are to make a start on protecting our global climate:

1. An early target must be set to prevent emissions from rising so far that future reductions become even more difficult.
2. Avoiding loopholes is even more important now than an ambitious target. Unless a very ambitious target is set, which now seems unlikely, allowing sinks and trading within the protocol will create such loopholes that no real reductions will occur. Trading and sinks must be left until there is much more scientific precision in how they are measured.
3. Targets are not enough without credible policies and measures to achieve them. We urge all governments to table a list of the policies and measures they intend to adopt to attain their target, for example eco-taxes and energy performance standards.
4. Nuclear power is not an acceptable alternative to fossil energy. We should not accept country commitments that depend on increasing nuclear capability. We must join the solar age.
5. We endorse the Contraction and Convergence model under discussion at international talks (which as proposed would eventually give every human being an equal right to the atmosphere) as the most practical way to achieve justice and participation for developing countries.
6. As a nation, we must implement public and private initiatives at every level to support the Global Climate Treaty signed at the Earth Summit in 1992, committing industrial nations within a time framework to reducing emissions to 1990 levels.
7. The most authoritative assessment to date concludes that a worldwide carbon dioxide emissions reduction of 50-70 percent is necessary to contain climate change. The Kyoto Climate Protocol in 1998 falls far short, calling for only a five percent reduction. Nonetheless, the agreement is an important first step that all parties — especially the U.S. — should ratify as soon as possible.

8. We must drastically reduce, then eliminate, the use of fossil fuels. We must use energy more efficiently, and from clean, renewable sources. We must preserve the many valuable natural services including climactic stability provided by intact ecosystems. [See section E.2. [Fair Taxation on page 62](#) in chapter IV]

9. If we fail to summon the political will now to make these investments, the costs of climatic disruptions will almost certainly force us to make them later at a greater expense. Greenhouse gases and the threat of global warming must be addressed by the international community in concert, through international treaties and conventions, with the industrial nations at the forefront of this vital effort.



## F. Land Use and Sustainable Cities

Greens are advocates for the Earth. When we see the first picture ever taken of our green oasis from space, photographed from the window of the Apollo flight, we marvel at the preciousness of life.

We remember John Muir's and Edward Abbey's call to protect what is critical to our spirit. Experiencing the wilderness calls us to preserve pristine nature. Our advocacy is based on our love of nature and our recognition that it is beyond us.

Greens support restructuring institutions to conform to bioregional realities. Just as the planetary ecology consists of systems at various scales, so must our programs and institutions of ecological stewardship be scaled appropriately. The land, air, and water — the interconnected biosphere — is a unique and precious community deserving careful consideration and protection.

Guided by our sense of stewardship, all land use polices, plans, and practices should be based on sustainable development and production, the reduce-reuse-recycle ethic, and the encouragement of balance between optimum and diverse use of land.

### 1. Land Ownership and Property Rights

We encourage the social ownership and use of land at the community, local, and regional level. For example, community and conservation land trusts under covenants of ecological responsibility.

### 2. Urban Land Use

Well-considered urban land use strategies are essential to the well being and quality of life of all residents and visitors, and also are necessary for the ecological sustainability of the Earth.

Because the Earth is essentially a closed system, it cannot tolerate unrestrained growth without serious environmental consequences. The consequence of over-development has been and continues to be environmental destruction as areas exceed their natural carrying capacities.

By following the specific items set forth below, planners can design urban land use strategies that will help reduce each person's *ecological footprint*. This term refers to the amount of land the average person actually uses given overall consumption of housing, food, energy, etc. A smaller ecological footprint per person means less impact on our environment. We support coordinated urban land use patterns that help preserve agricultural and wilderness lands.

It is imperative that we as a nation find a means to control urban sprawl. The ecological, social, and fiscal crises engendered by sprawl are becoming evermore apparent. Greens enthusiastically endorse the *Metropolitica* movement, which seeks to control sprawl by integrating such measures as urban growth boundaries, tax base sharing, fair housing, and metropolitan transportation.

The Green Party proposes to:

- a. Support the use of green technologies that restore natural ecosystems while improving the quality of life for humans and furthering the co-existence of human populations with other species and natural systems.
- b. Support the use of the ecological footprint model to help communities assess the burden they place on their local, regional, and global environment, and to help them understand how they can improve their own communities.
- c. Encourage appropriately higher-density communities and urban infill development to prevent urban sprawl into agricultural and wilderness areas.
- d. Integrate an increased and sufficient number of affordable housing units into urbanized areas. These units should remain a part of the affordable housing stock for the life of the units. Also, protect current residents from displacement and encourage a wide variety of housing that will attract a wide variety of new residents.
- e. Support population densities in urbanized areas with appropriate infrastructure to facilitate public transit travel, shopping, recycling, renewable energy production, urban forestry, habitat restoration, public park renewal, and the re-development of brownfields.
- f. Support environmental justice policies that give communities a voice in planning future development with the goal of preventing concentration of polluting infrastructure in under-represented poor and/or minority communities.
- g. Plan open spaces, parklands, greenbelts, and public garden plots as components of all development plans.
- h. Locate schools, places of employment, medical facilities, and shopping areas within easy walking or bicycling distances from residences, or at mass transit stops.
- i. Include bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure in development plans. For example, inter-connected bike paths and pedestrian-only malls.
- j. Support efforts of cities and counties to re-develop, restore, and revitalize impacted local ecosystems.
- k. Support the long-term goal of re-establishing land use patterns and electoral districts consistent with a bioregional model of land use.
- l. Explore closed-loop sewage treatment systems and urban graywater systems wherever possible.
- m. Change tax and planning laws to promote decentralized, renewable energy infrastructures in urban and suburban areas.
- n. Change tax and planning laws to promote restoration and revitalization of degraded lands, improvements in watershed management, and protection/reintroduction of listed, threatened, or endangered species in suburban, rural, and agricultural areas.
- o. Educate citizens about reducing levels of consumption including over-consumption of living space.
- p. Rather than move populations back to the land, it is important to bring the land back to cities. This requires consolidating housing into such structures as *ecolonies*, to free open space, and to move about by bicycle, train, bus and on foot so that roadways may be converted to parkland and agriculture. This would replenish urban soils and reduce water waste by shifting from flush toilets to compost toilets. Also in other ways we should restructure cities to respect the capacities of nature and rely on the creativity of neighborhoods.

### 3. Natural Resource Management

Greens believe that effective land and resource management practices must be founded on stewardship, such as incorporated in a *land ethic* as articulated by Aldo Leopold. Stringent natural resource management should serve to prevent activities that adversely affect public and adjacent lands.

The Green Party calls for:

- a. Repeal of the Mining Act of 1872. We demand a halt to federal mineral, oil and gas, and resource giveaways, “royalty holidays,” and flagrant concessions to the mining, energy and timber industries; and an immediate crackdown on their evasive and fraudulent reporting.
- b. Strict enforcement of clean-up of industrial-scale natural resource extraction activities. For example,

cleaning up tailings, pits, and runoff from mining operations by agreements with companies that can include posting of site restoration bonds prior to commencement of operations. The regional long term environmental and social impacts of any resource extractions should be minimized, and the land restored to a healthy ecological state.

- c. halting all current international funding policies that promote destruction of forest ecosystems, and we call for an end to the trade in endangered hardwoods. We support laws that promote paper recycling and mandate sustainable forestry practices that promote biodiversity. We also call for the development of alternative sources of paper manufacturing, such as from hemp fiber.
- d. Protecting old growth forests, a zero-cut policy banning industrial timber harvest on federal and state lands, a ban on all clear-cutting, and a reduction of road building on public lands.
- e. Raising grazing fees on public land to approximate fair market value, and significant grazing reforms. We support policies that favor small-scale ranchers over corporate operations (which are often used as tax write-offs, a practice that undermines family ranches).
- f. Preserving and extending wildlife habitat and biological diversity by creating and preserving large continuous tracts of open space (complete

ecosystems so as to permit healthy, self-managing wildlife populations to exist in a natural state). We oppose any selling of our National Parks, the commercial privatizing of public lands, and cutbacks or exploitation in our national wilderness areas.

- g. Public involvement in decision making by active and well funded Resource Management Districts and Councils. This will aid a long term process on the use of federal and state trust lands, which are currently controlled by the Bureau of Land Management, National Forest Service, National Park Service, and State Land Offices.
- h. Banning indiscriminate wildlife “damage control practices” and abolishing the Animal Damage Control agency that has been renamed Wildlife Services.
- i. Comprehensive baseline mapping of our nation’s biodiversity resources.
- j. Watershed planning to mitigate the impacts of urban development on our streams, rivers, and lakes. Storm water management, soil erosion and sedimentation control, the establishment of vegetative buffers, and performance standards for development are appropriate measures in this area. Special attention must be given to the restoration and protection of riparian areas, which are critical habitats in healthy ecosystems.



## G. Water

Water is essential to all forms of life. The Green Party calls for an international declaration that water belongs to the Earth and all of its species. Water is a basic human right! The U.S. Government must lead the way in declaring water a fundamental human right and prevent efforts to privatize, export, and sell for profit a substance that is essential to all life.

We face a worldwide water crisis. According to the United Nations, more than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water. If current trends persist, by 2025 as much as two-thirds of the world’s population will be living with a serious scarcity of water. Multinational corporations recognize these trends and are moving fast to monopolize water supplies around the world. They argue that privatizing water is the best way to allocate this valuable resource, and they are scheming to have water declared a human need so that it can be commodified and sold on the open market ensuring that the allocation of water will be based on principles of scarcity and profit maximization.

We do not agree. With water sold to the highest bidder, the rich will have plenty while the poor will be left with little but polluted water, and short term profits will preclude any concern for long term sustainability. We must stop this privatization before the infrastructures become so established that it will be impossible to avoid a disaster of epic proportions.

Governments are signing away their control over their domestic water supplies by participating in trade treaties such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and in institutions such as the World Trade Organization. The World Bank recently adopted a policy of water privatization and full-cost water pricing.

1. We need strong national and international laws promote conservation, reclaim polluted water systems, develop water-supply restrictions, ban toxic and pesticide dumping, control or ban corporate farming, and bring the rule of law to transnational corporations that pollute water systems. Mining and depleting the present underground aquifers must be severely restricted.
2. Greens oppose the privatization of water and demand that the U.S. government pass strong laws with effective enforcement mechanisms to assure a safe and adequate supply of water for its citizens and all life within its borders.
3. New forms of international, bioregional, and community organizations, watershed/ecosystem-based, must be created to monitor and equitably distribute the fresh water necessary for all life on our planet. Decisions about water must be based on an ecosystems approach.

Cycles of intense drought and flooding have demonstrated the need to reorient our priorities in order to achieve a truly sustainable water policy. Over-development and poor planning have resulted in increasing rain-impermeable areas, which compounds the severity and frequency of flooding and pollution in regions downstream. We must begin to understand and apply a holistic *watershed approach* to managing our water resources. The principle of bioregionalism (living within the means of a region's natural resources) should give direction to future water policies.

4. Conservation must be an essential part of any water policy. Water conservation also reduces energy consumption and pollution.

To conserve water, the Green Party proposes to:

- ▷ Mandate water efficient appliances and fixtures be used in all new construction, and promote retrofitting of older buildings.
- ▷ Promote native landscaping and other drought resistant/ climate-appropriate plants, in order to reduce the need for irrigation.
- ▷ Promote drip irrigation systems where irrigation is necessary.

- ▷ Eliminate storm water pollution of our water resources through education of our citizens, enforcement of our laws, and holistic watershed management. Promote storm water technologies that detain, treat, filtrate, and use storm waters near where it is collected.
  - ▷ Promote the appropriate reuse of the "gray" and "black" waters we produce. Use separation techniques, such as dual piping systems where pure water is used for drinking and washing, and reclaimed water is used for lawn watering and similar purposes.
  - ▷ Mandate pre-treatment of industrial wastes to eliminate the presence of metals, solvents, and other toxins in sewer water. This would reduce the cost of municipal treatment and encourage wastewater reuse.
  - ▷ Promote passive and natural systems, such as wetlands, for water and wastewater treatment where appropriate.
  - ▷ Eliminate water subsidies for corporate agribusiness. Higher water prices give agribusiness incentives to conserve.
  - ▷ Assist community organizations to monitor the use of local resources, and to oversee the enforcement of water quality regulations.
  - ▷ Preserve and restore the nation's natural water features (streams, rivers, lakes, bays, wetlands and groundwater aquifers) that are vital to achieving sustainable use of water resources.
5. Chemicals used in the fluoridation of America's public drinking water supplies are toxic waste by-products. The majority of these toxic wastes come from the phosphate fertilizer industry. Fluoride accumulates in the human body through ingestion and inhalation. A growing body of research suggests that fluoride may be associated with arthritis, hip fractures, bone cancer, kidney damage, infertility, and brain disorders. For these reasons, the Green Party opposes the fluoridation of drinking water.



## H. Agriculture

Food is a necessity and a fundamental human right. All people have a right to adequate, safe, nutritional and high quality food; and those who grow it have a right to a fair return for their labor.

Our current food system is dominated by centralized agribusiness and unsustainable practices that threaten our food security, degrade the environment, destroy communities, and squeeze out family farmers. Our so-called cheap food comes at the expense of the exploitation of our farmers along with the oppression of third world peoples, inhumane treatment of animals, pollution of air and water, and degradation of our land.

The agricultural system for the 21st Century must provide a high quality of life for farmers, nutritious and safe food for consumers, and reward farming methods that enhance the quality of water, soil, and air, and the beauty of the landscape.

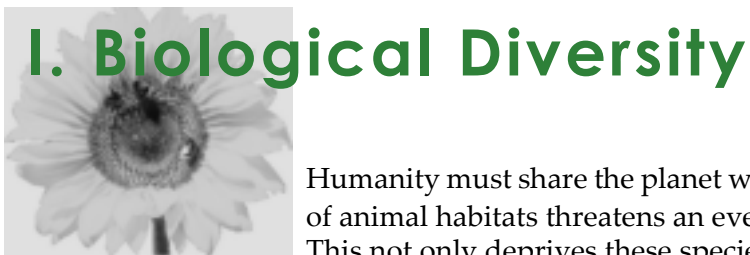
1. We encourage legislation that assists new farmers and ranchers, that promotes widespread ownership to small and medium-sized farms and ranches, and that revitalizes and repopulates rural communities and promotes sustainable development and stewardship.
2. We support new farming and growing opportunities and urge the inclusion of non-traditional crops and foods in farm programs.
3. We advocate regionalizing our food system and decentralizing agriculture lands, production, and distribution. We encourage public support for producer and consumer cooperatives, community kitchens, Community Supported Agriculture, urban agriculture, and community farms and gardens.
4. We advocate the creation of a Food Policy Council composed of farmers, including small farmers and consumers, to oversee the USDA and all food policies at the local, state, and national level. This council should adjudicate conflicts of interest that arise when industries police themselves.
5. We support the highest organic standards (California Organic Certification Standards, for example). We advocate shifting price supports and government subsidies to organic food products so that they will be competitive with chemically-produced food. We believe that everyone, not just the wealthy, must be able to afford safe and healthy food.
6. We urge the banning of sewage sludge or hazardous wastes as fertilizer, and of irradiation and the use of genetic engineering in all food production.
7. We would phase-out man-made pesticides and artificial fertilizers. We support Integrated Pest Management techniques as an alternative to chemical-based agriculture.
8. Food prices ought to reflect the true cost of food, including the health effects of eating processed foods, antibiotic resistance, pesticide effects on growers and consumers, soil erosion, water pollution, pesticide drift, and air pollution. Indirect costs (loss of rural communities, a heavily subsidized transportation system, cost of the military necessary to defend cheap oil, and reduced security), though more difficult to calculate, should be factored into the cost of our highly centralized food system.
9. World hunger can best be addressed by food security – being self-sufficient for basic needs. Overpopulation is largely a consequence – not simply a cause – of poverty and environmental destruction, and all remedial actions must address living standards and food security through sustainable production.
10. Because of the tremendous amount of energy used in agriculture, we support farm subsidies to encourage the transition from dirty fuels to clean renewable energy as one of the most effective ways to move our country to a sustainable future.
11. We support legislation that provides energy and fuel conservation through rotational grazing, cover-crop rotations, nitrogen-fixing systems, and fuel-free, clean renewable energy development on the farm.
12. We encourage states to promote net-metering to make decentralized energy production economically viable.

13. Animal farming must be practiced in ethically and environmentally sustainable ways. Rapidly phase out the use of confined animal feeding operations and factory farms.
14. Applying the Precautionary Principle to genetically modified organisms (GMOs), we support a moratorium until safety can be demonstrated by independent (non-corporate funded), long-term tests for food safety, genetic drift, resistance, soil health, effects on non-target organisms, and cumulative interactions.

Most importantly, we support the growing international demand to eliminate patent rights for genetic material, lifeforms, gene-splicing techniques, and biochemicals derived from them. This position

is defined by the Treaty to Share the Genetic Commons, which is available through the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy ([www.iatp.org](http://www.iatp.org)). The implications of corporate takeover and the resulting monopolization of genetic intellectual property by the bioengineering industry are immense.

15. We support mandatory, full-disclosure food and fiber labeling. A consumer has the right to know the contents in their food and fiber, how they were produced, and where they come from. Labels should address the presence of GMOs, use of irradiation, pesticide application (in production, transport, storage, and retail), and the country of origin.



## I. Biological Diversity

Humanity must share the planet with all other species. Our continuing destruction of animal habitats threatens an ever-growing number of species with extinction. This not only deprives these species of their existence, but will deprive future human generations of the enrichment of having these species on the Earth.

Ecological systems are diverse and interlocking, and nature's survival strategy can best be found in the adaptability that comes as a result of biological diversity. All policies concerning human settlement, food, energy, natural resources, water, coastal development, and industrialization should be formulated to prevent further disruption of the non-human ecosystems' ability to maintain themselves.

1. The Green Party supports a strengthened and enforceable Endangered Species Act.
2. The Convention on Biological Diversity, first adopted at the Earth Summit in 1992, is a primary statement of purpose regarding how we can act to preserve and sustain our common genetic resources. We protest the demands of the U.S. to amend this unprecedented international agreement on behalf of the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries, with their insistence on protection of their intellectual property and technology transfer rights.
3. We encourage, and support public access to, seed banks and seed collections that emphasize traditional and heirloom seeds.
4. We call for wide-spread education on the critical importance of efforts being made to replant indigenous plant life where it has dwindled or been lost.
5. We oppose monopolistic production of high-tech hybrid seeds. This is the basis of monoculture where agribusiness relies on non-sustainable methods such as single crop varieties bred with industrial traits and grown with high input of energy, chemicals, and pesticides. This has led to a massive loss of biodiversity, displacing traditional varieties and seed stocks.
6. We encourage the use of diverse natural seed varieties passed down over many generations. Crops can be grown with the best plants' seeds being saved season to season.
7. We oppose international trade agreements (NAFTA, GATT and the WTO in particular) that have precedent-setting provisions protecting transnational, corporate control of the intellectual property of genetic material, hybrid seeds, and proprietary products.
8. We support reintroducing native species to areas from which they have been eradicated, eliminating predator control on public lands, and reintroducing native predators where they would contribute to a viable ecosystem.

9. We should educate ourselves about animal behaviors to overcome our culture's irrational fear of wildlife, and learn techniques of co-existence with other species.
10. Since the efforts to clone animals — and eventually humans — has been undertaken by

profit-making corporations, the purpose behind such projects is to manufacture commodities. To classify a human (or any part thereof, including human DNA and body organs) as a commodity is to turn human beings into property.

## J. Ethical Treatment of Animals



Cruelty to animals is repugnant and criminal. The mark of a humane and civilized society lies in how we treat the least protected among us. To extend rights to other sentient, living beings is our responsibility and a mark of our place among all of creation. We call for an intelligent, compassionate approach to the treatment of animals.

We reject the belief that our species is the center of creation, and that other life forms exist only for our use and enjoyment. Our species does not have the right to exploit and inflict violence on other creatures simply because we have the desire and power to do so. Our ethic upholds not only the value of biological diversity and the integrity and continuity of species, but also the value of individual lives and the interest of individual animals.

The Green Party advocates humane treatment of animals with the following policies:

1. Redirect the funds that are disbursed annually by the National Institutes of Health away from animal experiments and more towards direct health care, preventive medicine, and biomedical research using non-animal procedures such as clinical, epidemiological, and cell culture research.
2. Phase-out the use of animals for consumer product testing, tobacco and alcohol testing, psychological testing, classroom demonstrations and dissections, weapons development and other military programs.
3. Mandate clear labeling of products to tell whether or not they have been tested on animals and if they contain any animal products or by-products.
4. Establish procedures to develop greater public scrutiny of all animal research. These should include the welfare of laboratory animals, and a halt to wasteful public funding of unnecessary research such as duplicative experiments.
5. End the abuse of animals, including farm animals, and strengthen our enforcement of existing laws.
6. Ban the use of goods produced from exotic or endangered animals.
7. Prohibit large scale commercial breeding facilities, such as “puppy mills,” because of the massive suffering, overpopulation, and ill health such facilities produce.
8. Subsidize spay and neuter clinics to combat the ever-worsening pet overpopulation problem that results in the killing of millions of animals every year. Where unwanted companion animals are being killed in shelters, we advocate mandatory spay and neuter laws.
9. Ban the exploitation of animals in violent entertainment and sports.





## K. Forestry Practices

Forests are indispensable to human and animal life and must be protected.

Vast forests once covered most land, moderating the Earth's climate and providing habitats for myriad species of wildlife. The Earth's remaining forests are a critical resource in that useful products, especially medicines, originate in the forest. Today's global market economy, in the hands of multi-national corporations, irresponsibly uses and often destroys this valuable and irreplaceable resource.

The governments of many countries are selling off their rain forest land to cattle growers for the production of cheap beef, most of which is exported to first-world countries such as the U.S. Unsuitable rain forest land is also given to subsistence farmers who ruin the soil in a few seasons. In the meantime, landowners hoard prime agricultural land for speculation. On both state and federal lands, trees are harvested and the raw logs are exported, causing jobs to be exported.

The Green Party calls for actions to protect our forests:

1. Overhaul state and U.S. Forest Service rules to protect our forests and use them wisely.
2. Review, reform and restructure all federal and state land-use policies so that our practices become environmentally sustainable, and so that forests provide a continuing supply of high quality wood products.
3. Stop building logging roads in national forests at taxpayers' expense. These roads not only cost more than the revenue from timber sales that they expedite, but they also contribute to soil erosion and silting of streams, which ruin fish habitats.
4. Ban the harvest of Ancient Forests.
5. Ban the export of raw logs and other minimally processed forest products (pulp, chips, carts, slabs, etc.), which causes American job loss.
6. Offer subsidies to local watershed-based mills. This will maximize employment opportunities through value-added processing, and promote sustainability and worker control.
7. Use work projects, goats, and other sustainable methods to control undergrowth rather than spraying herbicides, especially near communities.
8. Grow and use hemp as a plentiful and renewable resource for the manufacture of paper and other forest products.
9. Protect significant archaeological, historical and cultural sites.
10. Support the rights of people indigenous to the rain forest, and their ecologically sound use of the forest — such as rubber extraction, nut gathering, and collecting medicinal herbs. End the importation of rain forest beef.
11. Forgive the debts of Third World countries that need help in halting the destruction of their rain forest lands.
12. Develop labels that identify ecologically sound forest products. This would help consumers to support ecologically sound forestry.
13. Protect of wildlife habitats, fisheries, biodiversity, scenery, and recreation. We must accept responsibility for the affect local actions have on the global economy and ecology.



# L. Ocean Protection

Our oceans, with their enormous diversity of life and function, are essential to life on Earth and must be preserved.

Today, the oceans are threatened by both governments and businesses who exploit ocean resources without considering the consequences. Exploitation of undersea mineral wealth is often done without regard for the environmental damage to land and sea. Greed and indiscriminate harvesting techniques lead to needless devastation of marine species.

Ocean vessels contaminate the sea through leaks large and small, and by dumping their refuse with impunity. Whole oceans are threatened with radioactive contamination by ships transporting weapons-grade plutonium, and by oceanic testing of nuclear weapons. The oceans are further contaminated by heavily polluted streams and rivers, and by undersea toxic dump sites with secret contents.

We favor accelerating research on the nature of the oceans that cover most of our planet. It is essential that we learn as much as possible about the effects of global warming, destruction of coral reefs, and depletion of fish populations upon the oceans.

The Green Party supports the following ocean protection measures:

1. Urge the U.S. government to sign the Laws of the Sea Treaty that establishes the global sharing of ocean resources.
2. Support the National Oceans Protection Act which bans offshore drilling to a distance of 50 to 175 miles from U.S. shores.
3. Establish environmental standards for ocean-going vessels.
4. Ban ocean transportation of nuclear and toxic wastes.
5. Map undersea toxic dump sites and, where possible, recover and treat the toxic wastes.
6. Ban drift-net fishing and long-line fishing, practices that indiscriminately kills marine mammals and other species not intended for the catch. Ban importing of fish and fish products from countries that use drift-nets.
7. Legislate phasing out U.S. factory trawlers while promoting sustainable, community-based fishing.
8. Ban importation of coral products and the destruction of breakwaters that are necessary to protect dying reefs.
9. Maintain the ban on international whale trade, which was debated at the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species.

# IV. *ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY*

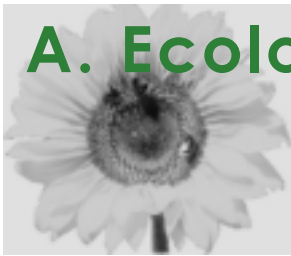
No economic system is sustainable unless it accommodates the ecosystems on which it depends. Our current system—based on the notion of perpetual economic expansion on a finite planet—is seriously flawed. We urgently need to apply human ingenuity to the goal of using far less from nature to meet our needs, which is a different goal from exploiting nature and Third World people so that we can meet the invented and implanted false “needs” that advertisers continually push at us in a grow-or-die type of economy. We need to acquire the ability to distinguish between need and greed, in spite of what the media assure us we “need.” We also need to restore a progressive tax structure, rather than continuing to move money toward the top echelons of society while squeezing everyone else. Such a restoration, plus the end to the bankrupting military adventurism and imperial designs, would significantly reduce the huge federal deficit that has been imposed on the American people since 2000.

Foremost, the Green Party stands for community-based economics and regional trade. We believe that the only model of true economic security is for a community and area to be largely (not entirely) self-sufficient in the production of its necessities. Through foreign trade, they can then export that which is extra, and that which they could afford to lose should environmental disasters, social unrest in their trading partners’ countries, or other disruptions disturb the flow of their trade.

We support not the corporate dominance of “free trade”—which, through the machinations of the World Trade Organization places the desires of transnational corporations above the level of national laws—but true “fair trade,” which protects communities, labor, and the environment. Community-based economics and regional trade keep money circulating largely in the community and the region, rather than going to distant corporate headquarters as soon as a purchase is made. This is the most rational model for economic security. It includes family farms and community-supported agriculture, farmers’ markets, credit unions, nonprofit community-development corporations, incubator programs to aid start-up small businesses, apprenticeship programs in local businesses, local currency, community-focused banks, and trade with adjacent regions. Consumers in this type of market economy prefer to patronize locally owned businesses because each purchase has a positive rippling effect in the community. Unlike other political parties in the modern era, the Green Party views (even community-based) economics not as an end in itself but as a service to community development through the building and strengthening of community bonds that constitute the social fabric.

We can learn from indigenous people who believe that the Earth and its natural systems are to be respected and cared for in accordance with ecological principles. Concepts of ownership should be employed in the context of stewardship, and social and ecological responsibility. We support environmental and social responsibility in all businesses, whether privately or publicly owned.

# A. Ecological Economics



To create an enduring society we must devise a system of production and commerce where every act is sustainable and restorable. We believe that all business has a social contract with society and the environment — in effect a fiduciary responsibility — and that the concepts of socially responsible business and shareholder democracy can be models for prospering, successful business.

1. We call for an economic system that is based on a combination of private businesses, decentralized democratic cooperatives, publicly owned enterprises, and alternative economic structures. Collectively, this system puts human and ecological needs alongside profits to measure success, and maintains accountability to communities.
2. Community-based economics constitutes an alternative to both corporate capitalism and state socialism. It values diversity and decentralization.  
  
Recognition of limits is central to this system. The drive to accumulate power and wealth is a pernicious characteristic of a civilization headed in a pathological direction. Greens advocate that economic relations become more direct, more cooperative, and more egalitarian.  
  
Humanizing economic relations is just one aspect of our broader objective: to shift toward a different way of life characterized by sustainability, regionalization, more harmonious balance between the natural ecosphere and the human-made technosphere, and revival of community life. Our perspective is antithetical to both Big Business and Big Government.
3. Greens support a major redesign of commerce. We endorse *true-cost pricing*. [See section E.1. [True Cost Pricing on page 62](#) in this chapter] We support production methods that eliminates waste. In natural systems, everything is a meal for something else. Everything recycles, there is no waste. We need to mimic natural systems in the way we manufacture and produce things. Consumables need to be designed to be thrown into a compost heap and/or eaten. Durable goods would be designed in closed-loop systems, ultimately to be disassembled and reassembled. Toxics would be safeguarded, minimally produced, secured, and would ideally have markers identifying them in perpetuity with their makers.
4. Sustaining our quality of life, economic prosperity, environmental health, and long-term survival demands that we adopt new ways of doing business. We need to remake commerce to encourage diversity and variety, responding to the enormous complexity of global and local conditions. Big business is not about appropriateness and adaptability, but about power and market control. Greens support small business, responsible stakeholder capitalism, and broad and diverse forms of economic cooperation. We argue that economic diversity is more responsive than big business to the needs of diverse human populations.
5. Greens view the economy as a part of the ecosystem, not as an isolated subset in which nothing but resources come in and products and waste go out. There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and environmental protection. There is an absolute limit to economic growth based on laws of thermodynamics and principles of ecology. Long before that limit is reached, an optimum size of the economy is reached which maximizes human welfare in an holistic sense.
6. We support a Superfund for Workers program as envisioned by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union in 1991. Such a program would guarantee full income and benefits for all workers displaced by ecological conversion until they find new jobs with comparable income and benefits.
7. The Green Party supports methods, such as the Index of Social Health Indicators, the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, and the Genuine Progress Indicator, that take into account statistics on housing, income, and nutrition.



## B. Measuring Economic Progress – Economic Growth and the Steady-State Economy

Economic growth has been a primary goal of American policy. Corporations, politicians beholden to corporations, and economists funded by corporations advocate a theory of unlimited economic growth stemming from technological progress. Based upon established principles of the physical and biological sciences, however, there is a limit to economic growth.

American economic growth is having negative effects on the long-term ecological and economic welfare of the United States and the world. There is a fundamental conflict between economic growth and ecological health (for example, biodiversity conservation, clean air and water, atmospheric stability).

We cannot rely on technological progress to solve ecological and long-term economic problems. Rather, we should endeavor to make lifestyle choices that reinforce a general equilibrium of humans with nature. This requires consciously choosing to foster environmentally sound technologies, whether they are newer or older technologies, rather than technologies conducive to conspicuous consumption and waste.

1. Economic growth, as gauged by increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is a dangerous and anachronistic American goal. The most viable and sustainable alternative is a steady-state economy. A steady-state economy has a stable or mildly fluctuating product of population and per capita consumption, and is generally indicated by stable or mildly fluctuating GDP. The steady-state economy has become a more appropriate goal than economic growth in the United States and other large, wealthy economies. A steady-state economy precludes ever-expanding production and consumption of goods and services. However, a steady-state economy does not preclude economic development – a qualitative process not gauged by GDP growth and other measures that overlook ecological effects.
2. One way to measure the economy is to assess the value of non-monetary goods and services and measure the rate of infant mortality, life expectancy of people, educational opportunities offered by the state, family stability, environmental data, and health care for all people.

Another measure is to quantify human benefit (in terms of education, health care, elder care, etc.) provided by each unit of output. Measuring the gap between the most fortunate and the least fortunate in our society, for example, tells us how well or poorly we are doing in creating an economy that does not benefit some at the expense of others.

3. For many nations with widespread poverty, increasing per capita consumption (through economic growth or through more equitable distributions of wealth) remains an appropriate goal. Ultimately, however, the global ecosystem will not be able to support further economic growth. Therefore, an equitable distribution of wealth among nations is required to maintain a global steady-state economy. A global economy with inequitable wealth distribution will be subject to continual international strife and conflict. Such strife and conflict, in turn, ensures the economic unsustainability of some nations and threatens the economic sustainability of all.

## C. Citizen Control Over Corporations



We must end corporate welfare. Currently, corporations possess more rights and freedoms than natural human persons. Through a series of judicial rulings, and by virtue of their ability to control governments and economies through concentration of wealth, corporations have rewritten our Constitution and have emerged as unaccountable, unelected governments. The Green Party supports all reforms that seek governmental regulation of corporations. In the interim, we support measures that hold executives and officers of corporations directly liable for harm that results from their decisions.

The U.S. intentionally defines corporations through charters or certificates of incorporation. In exchange for the charter, a corporation was obligated to obey all laws, to serve the common good, and to cause no harm. Early state legislators wrote charter laws to limit corporate authority and ensure that when a corporation caused harm, they could revoke its charter.

In the late 19th century, however, corporations claimed special protections under the Constitution. They insisted that once formed, corporations might operate forever with the privilege of limited liability and freedom from community or worker interference in business judgments.

One point remains unequivocal: Because corporations have become the dominant economic institution of the planet, they must address and squarely face the social and environmental problems that afflict humankind.

1. The federal government doles out billions in subsidies and tax breaks to corporate special interests. The current level of influence now being exerted by corporate interests over the public interest is unacceptable. We challenge the propriety and equity of corporate welfare that comes in the form of tax breaks, subsidies, payments, grants, bailouts, giveaways, unenforced laws and regulations; and in historic, continuing access to our vast public resources, including the airwaves, millions of acres of land, forests, mineral resources, intellectual property rights, and government-created research.
2. We support strong national standards for labor rights and the environment so that corporations can no longer force states and cities into a brutal competition for jobs at any cost. Legal doctrines must be continually revised in recognition of the changing needs of an active, democratic citizenry. Huge multinational corporations are artificial creations, not natural persons uniquely sheltered under constitutional protections. We support local and state government attempts to define corporations and to prevent them from exercising democratic rights that are uniquely possessed by the citizens of the United States.



## D. Livable Income

We affirm the importance of access to a livable income.

1. We call for a universal basic income (sometimes called a guaranteed income, negative income tax, citizen's income, or citizen dividend). This would go to every adult regardless of health, employment, or marital status, in order to minimize government bureaucracy and intrusiveness into people's lives. The amount should be sufficient so that anyone who is unemployed can afford basic food and shelter. State or local governments should supplement that amount from local revenues where the cost of living is high.
2. Job banks and other innovative training and employment programs which bring together the private and public sectors must become federal, state and local priorities. People who are unable to find decent work in the private sector should have options through publicly funded opportunities. Workforce development programs must aim at moving people out of poverty.
3. The growing inequities in income and wealth between rich and poor; unprecedented discrepancies in salary and benefits between corporate top executives and line workers; loss of the "American dream" by the young and middle-class — each is a symptom of decisions made by policy-makers far removed from the concerns of ordinary workers trying to keep up.
4. A clear living wage standard should serve as a foundation for trade between nations, and a "floor" of guaranteed wage protections and workers' rights should be negotiated in future trade agreements. The United States should take the lead on this front — and not allow destructive, predatory corporate practices under the guise of "free" international trade.



## E. True Cost Pricing and Tax Fairness

Middle-class and poor people are paying an ever greater proportion of federal taxes, and too often local and state taxes are unfair and regressive. The tax code is a labyrinth of deductions, loopholes, exemptions and write-offs, the result of insider- and industry-lobbying that has damaged our economy as it has served the interests of big business, financial institutions and the rich.

The high price of corporate welfare corrupts the political process by encouraging the exchange of political favors for campaign donations. Corporate tax breaks are ultimately paid for by higher taxes on the middle class. Tax breaks distort the rules of the marketplace and seldom serve a larger public purpose.

We call for a tax policy that moves to eliminate loopholes and other exemptions that favor powerful interests. Small business and the self-employed, in particular, should not be penalized by a tax system that benefits those who can influence the legislative tax committees for breaks and subsidies.

A central goal of tax policy should be transparency — a system that is simple, understandable, and resistant to the schemes of special interests.

When taxes are levied against labor, using labor in production becomes more expensive and is therefore a disincentive for employment. This also diminishes the economic value of labor by decreasing the worker's purchasing power thus discouraging work.

Corporations focus on revenue growth at the expense of nearly everything else. Even breaking the law can be justified when the fine for being caught is less than the profit to be made. We must motivate the business community to act responsibly towards the people and the Earth. One way is *true cost pricing* and the other way is *fair taxation*.

## 1. True Cost Pricing

True Cost Pricing (TCP) is an accounting and pricing system that includes all costs into the price of a product. This would make ecologically-sound products cheaper to the consumer in terms of market price and the demand for these products would increase. Also, various cultural/traditional industries that have been marginalized by unrestrained technology could flourish.

Under our current system, many products carry hidden environmental and social costs such as air and water pollution, deforestation, and toxic waste. These costs are created during the production, use, or disposal of the products. While the producer internalizes revenue and profits from these products, the costs are externalized to society and the natural environment. In addition, many of the laws that exist to prevent environmental and social damage are not adequately enforced. Examples include smog checking of vehicles, and tobacco taxes and court settlements, which are not being used as intended. In this way, externalized costs equate to a subsidy.

TCP would account for these costs. To implement TCP, we call for:

- a. Environmental taxes such as the Carbon Tax. [See carbon tax in the next section]
- b. TCP to be a basis for decisions on government projects and in Environmental Impact Statements.
- c. Integrate TCP into domestic industrial policies and regulations, and likewise promote it in international trade agreements.
- d. Implement product labeling to inform consumers of the total cost of the product's ingredients and manufacturing process.
- e. Enforce laws that exist to prevent environmental and social damage.
- f. Establish an information clearinghouse, consultant's network, and other communication channels for the exchange of information about ecologically benign techniques.
- g. Recognize that TCP may have short term impact on people of lesser financial means and implement measures to mitigate these effects.

## 2. Fair Taxation

Taxes pay for important public services. Tax policies should foster a more equitable progressive tax structure, as opposed to the present regressive nature of taxation that levies the heaviest burdens on those least able to pay.

Corporations currently receive tax breaks that promote growth and the consumption of resources. Tax breaks should promote sustainability and social responsibility.

Any shift in tax policy must be done gradually, so that people and government can adjust to the changes. Also, changes should move toward appropriate scale of collection and use of taxes

We propose:

- a. More progressive taxation. Sales, corporate and income taxes should be adjusted to relieve the burden on those less able to pay and increase the burden on large and multinational corporations and the super wealthy, who do not pay their fair share. Raise the state income tax for higher income people. Also, reduce income taxes for low-wage workers to encourage people to seek employment rather than relying on public assistance.
- b. Raising corporate taxes. The corporate share of taxes has fallen from 33% in the 1940s to 7% today, while the individual share has risen from 44% to 85%.
- c. Implementing tax policies that promote sustainability and social responsibility. Subsidies,



export incentives, tax loopholes and tax shelters that benefit large corporations now amount to hundreds of billions of dollars each year. These promote growth and the consumption of resources.

- d. Shifting investments away from such things as automating the production of disposable products, which reduces the number of jobs. Also, discourage leveraged buyouts and mergers, which extract working capital. Instead, we must promote community development and job creation.
- e. Imposing Carbon taxes on all fossil fuels, because of detrimental effects of carbon emissions on the environment. Those with the highest carbon content would be taxed the most, ranging from coal (highest) to oil to natural gas. Revenues would go into a fund initially earmarked for carbon-reducing activities. [See section E. [Clean Air / Greenhouse Effect / Ozone Depletion on page 47](#) in chapter III]
- f. Offsetting Regressive Taxes. The carbon tax would favor those of lower income by being directed to fund public transportation improvement and subsidies, weatherization and other efficiency

measures, and passive solar installations. As revenues increase, the funds would be used to provide relief to low income people in such programs as housing and education and could eventually replace regressive taxes such as sales taxes.

- g. Encouraging the enactment of the Tobin tax on financial transactions across borders.
- h. Decreasing taxes on labor.
- i. Decreasing the cap on the mortgage tax deduction for both federal and state income taxes.
- j. Re-establishment of the inheritance tax. Inheritance tax revenues should be dedicated to health and welfare benefits for the poor and to enlisted soldiers salaries.
- k. Aiming for revenue neutrality in the tax changes. We are not proposing a bigger overall role for government. However, there are some situations where certain priority activities are under-funded.
- l. Shifting tax policy gradually so that people and government can adjust to the changes. Also, changes should move toward appropriate scale of collection and use of taxes.



## F. Community Economic Involvement

Reforms that allow communities to have influence in their economic future should be implemented. Such reforms include the following:

1. Locally owned small businesses, which are more accessible to community concerns.
2. Local production and consumption where possible.
3. Incentives for cooperative enterprises, such as consumer co-ops, credit unions, incubators, micro-loan funds, local currencies, and other institutions that help communities develop economic projects.
4. Allowing municipalities to approve or disapprove large economic projects case-by-case based on environmental impacts, local ownership, community reinvestment, wage levels, and working conditions.
5. Allowing communities to set environmental, human rights, health and safety standards higher than federal or state minimums.
6. A national program to
  - ▷ invest in the commons;
  - ▷ to rebuild the infrastructure of communities;
  - ▷ repair and improve transportation lines between cities, and;
  - ▷ protect and restore the environment.A federal capital budget should be put in place and applied in a process that assesses federal spending as capital investment.
7. Applying direct democracy through town meetings, which express a community's economic wishes directly to local institutions and organizations.



# G. Small Business and the Self-Employed

Greens support a program that counteracts concentration and abuse of economic power. We support many different initiatives for forming successful, small enterprises that together can become an engine of (and sustainable model for) job creation, prosperity and progress. Small business is where the jobs are being created. Over the past decade and a half, all new net job growth has come from the small business sector.

The Green economic model is about true prosperity — Green means prosperity. Our goal is to go beyond the dedicated good work being done by many companies (referred to as “socially responsible business”) and to present new ways of seeing how business can help create a sustainable world, while surviving in a competitive business climate.

We believe that conservation should be profitable, and employment should be creative, meaningful and fairly compensated.

Access to capital is often an essential need in growing a business. [See section I.[Banking and Insurance Reform on page 66](#) in this chapter]

The present tax system acts to discourage small business as it encourages waste, discourages conservation, and rewards consumption. Big business has used insider access to dominate the federal tax code. The tax system needs a major overhaul to favor the legitimate and critical needs of the small business community. Retention of capital through retained earnings, efficiencies, and savings is central to small business competitiveness. Current tax policies often act to unfairly penalize small business.

1. Government should reduce unnecessary restrictions, fees, and bureaucracy. In particular, the Paper Simplification Act should be seen as a way to benefit small business, and it should be improved in response to the needs of small businesses and the self-employed.
2. Health insurance premiums paid by the self-employed should be fully deductible.
3. State and local government should encourage businesses that benefit the community especially. Economic development initiatives should include citizen and community input. The type and size of businesses that are given incentives (tax, loans, bonds, etc.) should be the result of local community participation.
4. Pension funds (the result of workers’ investments) should be examined as additional sources of capital for small business. [See section J.[Pension Reform on page 67](#) in this chapter]
5. Insurance costs should be brought down by means of active engagement with the insurance industry. Insurance pools need to be expanded.
6. One-stop offices should be established by government to assist individuals who want to change careers or go into business for the first time.
7. Home-based and neighborhood-based businesses should be assisted by forward-looking planning, not hurt by out-of-date zoning ordinances. Telecommuting and home offices should be aided, not hindered, by government.



# H. Work and Job Creation

There is plenty of work to do that does not jeopardize our future, does not widen the gap between the richest and the poorest in our society, and that can enrich our communities. We must encourage the creation of these opportunities. People

whose livelihoods depend on supporting remote, multi-national corporations cannot be expected to support changing the system.

The Green Party proposes a third alternative to a job or no job dichotomy: that is to provide everyone a sustainable livelihood. The need of our times is for security, not necessarily jobs. We need security in the knowledge that, while markets may fluctuate and jobs may come and go, we are still able to lead a life rooted in dignity and well-being.

The concept of a “job” is only a few hundred years old; and the artificial dichotomy between “employment” and “unemployment” has become a tool of social leverage for corporate exploiters. This produces a dysfunctional society in various ways: (1) It is used to justify bringing harmful industries to rural communities, such as extensive prison construction and clear cutting of pristine forests. (2) It has been used to pit workers (people needing jobs) against the interests of their own communities. (3) It has created a self-esteem crisis in a large segment of the adult population who have been forced into doing work that is irrelevant, socially harmful, or environmentally unsound.

We will also promote policies that have job-increasing effects. Many people will still need jobs for their security. We need to counterbalance the decline in jobs caused either by new technology, corporate flight to cheaper labor markets outside our borders, or the disappearance of socially wasteful jobs that will inevitably occur as more and more people embrace a green culture.

To begin a transition to a system providing sustainable livelihood, we support:

1. creating alternative, low-consumption communities and living arrangements, including a reinvigorated sustainable homesteading movement in rural areas and voluntary shared housing in urban areas.
2. Universal health care requiring coverage for all. [See section F. [Health Care on page 30](#) in chapter II]
3. The creating and spreading local currencies and barter systems.
4. Subsidizing technological development of consumer items that would contribute toward economic autonomy, such as renewable energy devices.
5. Establishing local non-profit development corporations.
6. Providing people with information about alternatives to jobs.
7. Reducing taxes on labor. This will make labor more competitive with energy and capital investment. (See Taxation above.)
8. Solidarity with unions and workers fighting the practice of contracting out tasks to part-time workers in order to avoid paying benefits and to break up unions.
9. Adopting a reduced-hour (30-35 hours) work week as a standard. This could translate into as many as 26 million new jobs.
10. Subsidizing renewable energy sources, which directly employ 2 to 5 times as many people for every unit of electricity generated as fossil or nuclear sources yet are cost competitive. Also, retrofit existing buildings for energy conservation and build non-polluting, low impact transportation systems.
11. Supporting small business by reducing tax, fee and bureaucratic burdens. The majority of new jobs today are created by small businesses. This would cut their failure rate and help them create more jobs.
12. Opposing the trend toward “bundling” of contracts that minimizes opportunity for small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses.
13. Reducing consumption to minimize outsourcing — the exportation of jobs to other countries — thus reducing the relative price of using U.S. workers.

## Creating Jobs

For creating jobs we propose:

7. Reducing taxes on labor. This will make labor more competitive with energy and capital investment. (See Taxation above.)



# I. Banking and Insurance Reform

The Green Party supports a broad program of reform in the banking, and the savings and loan industries that acts to ensure their commonwealth obligations to all communities. Since lending institutions are chartered by the state to serve the best interests of communities, the privileges that come with power at the center of commerce carry special social responsibilities.

1. The government should ensure that low- and moderate-income persons and communities, as well as small businesses, have access to banking services, affordable loans, and small-business supporting capital. Loans should be made available to small business at rates competitive to those offered big business. We support disclosure laws, anti-redlining laws, and a general openness on the part of the private sector regarding criteria used in making lending decisions. We oppose arbitrary or discriminatory practices that deny small business access to credit.
2. We oppose disinvestment practices, in which lending and financial institutions move money deposited in local communities out of those same communities, damaging the best interests of their customers and community. We support the extension of the Community Reinvestment Act and its key performance data provisions to provide public and timely information on the extent of housing loans, small business loans to minority-owned enterprises, investments in community development projects, and affordable housing.
3. We believe Congress should act to charter community development banks, which would be capitalized with public funds and work to meet the credit needs of local communities.
4. Insurance industry regulation is essential to reduce the cost of insurance by reducing
  - ▷ special-interest protections;
  - ▷ collusion and over-pricing, and;
  - ▷ excessive industry-wide practices that too often injure the interests of the insured when they are most vulnerable.We must prohibit bad-faith insurance practices, such as avoidance of obligations and price fixing.
5. We support federal laws that act to make policies transportable from job to job and seek to prevent insurance companies' rejecting applicants because of prior conditions. This is a move in the right direction but in no way addresses the scope of the problem, whether in health insurance, life insurance, business, liability, auto, or crop insurance.
6. We support initiatives in secondary insurance markets that work to expand
  - ▷ credit for economic development in inner cities;
  - ▷ affordable housing and home ownership among the poor;
  - ▷ transitional farming to sustainable agriculture, and;
  - ▷ for rural development maintaining family farms.
7. We oppose insurance laws that permit a company to own insurance on its employees.



## J. Pension Reform

Working people — who own over \$3 trillion in pension monies (deferred wages in effect) — should have financial options in where their money is invested apart from the current near-monopoly exerted by a handful of managers, banks, insurance companies, and mutual funds. Pension funds should not be used for corporate mergers, acquisitions and leveraged buyouts, corporate decisions that undercut workers rights, employment, and retirement while generously rewarding non-productive speculation. The current system has allowed vast amounts of American workers' hard-earned money to be squandered on job-ending, plant-moving, corporate downsizing.

Pension funds are gigantic capital pools that can, with government support, be used to meet community needs and benefit workers and their families directly.

1. Corporate-sponsored pension funds (the biggest category of funds) should be jointly controlled by management and workers, not exclusively by management.
2. Federal law must be changed so that pension funds need simply to seek a reasonable rate of return, not the prevailing market rate which greatly restricts where investments can be made.
3. A secondary pension market established by the government to insure pension investments made in socially beneficial programs must be considered as one method that could greatly expand the impact of this capital market, as demonstrated in the case of federally insured/ subsidized mortgage lending.
4. Prudent pension fund investing should both make money and do good work. Creating jobs and supporting employment programs in public/ private partnerships can become a priority as we seek to expand towards opportunities where new jobs are created — small business, not transnational business. We could target the under- and un-employed. We believe there are myriad opportunities for a profound shift in how the capital of America's workers is best put to use.



## K. Anti-trust Enforcement

The Green Party supports strong and effectively enforced anti-trust regulation to counteract the concentration of economic power that imposes a severe toll on the economy. The anti-trust division of the Justice Department has had its scope and powers reduced. An explosion of unregulated mergers and acquisitions, spin-offs, and leveraged buy-outs has overwhelmed the federal government's capacity to provide effective oversight. Financial and trading markets have become particularly vulnerable to insider trading. Securities and Exchange Commission regulation of these markets has seriously fallen short. Overall, what we see in unchecked market power is self-serving abuse of the democratic political process, price gouging, loss of productivity and jobs, reduced competitiveness, and of predatory and monopolistic practices.

1. The Federal Trade Commission must vigorously oversee mergers where the combined sales of the companies exceeds \$1 billion.
2. The Justice Department must redefine "relevant market share" in assessing mergers.
3. The Congress must enact its calls for competitiveness by stopping illegal monopolistic practices.
4. We oppose the largesse of government in the form of massive corporate entitlements.



# L. Advanced Technology and Defense Conversion

The Green Party supports defense technology transfer towards a peacetime technology-based economy, particularly new industrial applications and developments in the areas of advanced communications, alternative energy, non-toxic battery technology and waste management.

1. Consolidation of the nuclear weapons complex should move toward alternative civilian technologies and non-proliferation work, not toward a new generation of nuclear weapon design and production.
2. We recognize the need for de-escalating the continuing arms race, and we strongly oppose putting nuclear weapons, lasers and other weapons in space in a new militarization policy that is in clear violation of international law. [See section F. [Demilitarization and Exploration of Space](#) on page 15 in chapter I]
3. Let us go forward with government and civilian space programs; research initiatives in sustainability science, environmental protection, ecological economics and transportation, appropriate technologies and technology transfer; environmental sampling and monitoring; systems testing; laser communications; and high speed computers.
4. Let us devote a larger percentage of our nation's research and development budget, both private and public, toward civilian use and away from military use. Let us address our chronic trade imbalance in this fashion — not by increasing exports of military weapons and technologies. [See section L. [Advanced Technology and Defense Conversion](#) on page 68 in this chapter]
5. The Green Party opposes patenting or copyrighting lifeforms, algorithms, DNA, colors or commonly-used words and phrases. We support broad interpretation and ultimate expansion of the *Fair Use* of copyrighted works. We support open source and copyleft models in order to promote the public interest and the spirit of copyright.
6. We call for a federal Technology Assessment Office to examine how technology fits with life on Earth, with our neighborhoods, and with the quality of our daily lives.

## Telecommunications

Advanced telecommunications technologies (many of which came originally from defense applications), such as fiber optics, broadband infrastructure, the Internet, and the World Wide Web hold great promise for education, decentralized economies, and local control of decision-making. We believe we must move toward decentralization in these efforts, carefully protecting our individual rights as we go forward.

7. Advanced and high definition TV, digital communications, and wireless communications hold promise and challenge. For example, the public airwaves that will accommodate the new generation of telecommunications technology should not be free giveaways to media giants. An auction and built-in requirements that attach licenses to act in the public interest is needed. Technology provides tools: we must use these tools appropriately and ethically. [See section J. [Free Speech and Media Reform](#) on page 37 in chapter II]
8. Broadband Internet access should be open to bidding, not simply the current choice between cable or telephone company monopolies, where grassroots Internet service providers must merge or go out of business. Broadband access should be a taxpayer-funded utility, like water and sewer, ending the “digital divide” that keeps low-income folks from access to the Internet.

## Open-Source Software

Open-source software is necessary to achieve personal, cultural, and organizational security in the face of technological threats brought by corporations and individual criminals.

9. Government has a vital role in breaking up software monopolies, not so much by filing antitrust suits, but by buying nothing but open systems. The U.S. Government and the larger states are buyers large enough to influence the computer and software systems through their purchasing. It should be illegal for a government agency to create and store information vital to its operations in a format it doesn't control. Governments should always consider storing information with open-source software and in-house staff instead of only commercial systems, vendors and software. One way to achieve this would be to add a virtual bid for in-house open source deployment whenever a software purchase goes out for bid.
10. The Green Party supports protection of software (free or proprietary) by means of the copyright. We strongly oppose granting of software patents. Mathematical algorithms are discovered, not invented, by humans; therefore, they are not patentable. The overwhelming majority of software patents cover algorithms and should never have been awarded, or they cover message formats of some kind, which are essentially arbitrary. Format patents only exist to restrain competition, and the harm falls disproportionately on programmers who work independently or for the smallest employers.

## Nonotechnology

Nanotechnology — the science of manipulating matter at the molecular level — is poised to provide a new industrial revolution with vast social and environmental consequences. Like nuclear science and biotechnology, nanotechnology is being pursued largely outside of public debate, risking great harm and abuse in its use and application.

The Green Party calls for a halt to nanotechnology development until the following conditions are met:

11. Development of full and open public debate about the implications of nanotechnology and the fusion of nanotech with biological, materials and information sciences.
12. Development of democratic public control mechanisms which would regulate the direction of nanotechnology research and development.
13. Expanded research into the environmental and health consequences of exposure to nano-scale materials.
14. Development of technology to contain and monitor nano-scale materials, and.
15. Development of precautionary safety measures for the containment and control over nano-scale materials.



# M. National Debt

The national debt is approaching 7 trillion dollars, and the diversion to interest payments is nearly 20 percent of tax revenues. The Green Party calls for immediate debate and action to stop this transfer of wealth from the taxpayers to the wealthy.

For many years the federal government borrowed hundreds of billions of dollars. Money that should have been going into a better “safety net” for the poor, homes for the homeless, environmental and public lands conservation, sustainable jobs, research and development, roads and bridges, schools and the technologies of tomorrow, has been lost to servicing the national debt. We cannot ignore the consequences of our nation’s past deficits and the related costs of debt service.

Working people and the small business community are shouldering a disproportionate amount of the debt burden. Yet the incurrence of the federal debt was, to a large degree, the end product of those who were on watch during the Cold War and military-defense industry buildup. Also, hundreds of billions were lost in the savings and loan bailout, and to loopholes, tax breaks, and multinational corporate tax avoidance. Hundreds of billions were lost due to a failed tax code that has been held prisoner to special interests and has produced historic gross inequities between corporate America and working Americans.

During the 1980s, our national debt grew from approximately \$1 trillion to over \$5 trillion and we refused to fund Social Security, food stamps, public housing, higher education, public transportation, and other services.

1. We must continue to move toward reduction of the national debt and compensate for the neglect that the deficits caused.
2. We believe a comprehensive approach that forms a basis for a debt reduction plan would include debt payback, increased revenues, and decreased expenditures in some areas.
3. We support increases in domestic and discretionary spending, which is our nation’s essential “safety net” to protect those most in need. We support increases in the portion of entitlement benefits (one-fifth) that go to children, the lowest income, elderly, and disabled. These include food stamps, family assistance, Medicaid, and supplemental security income.
4. We oppose privatization of Social Security. We support increased funding for Social Security, public housing, higher education, public transportation, environmental protection, renewable energy, and energy conservation.
5. To help compensate for our nation’s neglect, we support tax increases on mega-corporate and wealthy interests, defense budget reductions, and entitlement reductions for those who can most afford reductions. Entitlement spending is over one-half of the federal budget. One way to reduce entitlement costs substantially is by means testing, which is scaling back payments to the six million citizens in families with incomes over \$50,000 annually.
6. We must revitalize the public sector. As taxes on working people have been unfairly increased, many important public services have been sharply reduced. Corporate-backed politicians are using the anti-government sentiment they have so carefully engineered to kill vital programs that many employers have always despised. If corporations continue to get their way, OSHA will be gutted, our environmental and labor laws will be worthless, our public health system will be dismantled, and the safety net and public universities will be only a dim memory.



# Index

## A

abortion 14, 19  
academic research 28  
access to government 8  
advertising 37  
affordable housing 49, 66  
affordable loans 66  
agribusiness 52  
AIDS/HIV 32  
air waves 37  
airplane noise 45  
airports 45  
alternative service to military 11  
alternative therapies 30  
Americans with Disabilities Act 22  
Ancient Forests 55  
Animal farming 53  
animals in product testing 24  
animals, treatment of 54  
Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty 12  
anti-trust regulation 67  
armed forces personnel 23  
arms race 68  
arms sales 12  
art and culture 10  
art, censor 29  
art, funding 29  
artist 29  
artistic expression 29  
artwork 29  
assassination 12  
atmosphere 47  
auto's dominance 44

## B

ballot access 9  
banking reform 66  
beverage containers 46  
bicycle fleets 44  
bikeways 44  
binding arbitration 33  
biodiversity 50  
biological diversity 53  
bioregional confederations 8  
bioregional land use 49  
birth control 37  
birthrates 36  
bisexual 21  
Boy Scouts of America 23  
breeding facilities 54  
building codes 43

## C

CAFE 45  
campaign finance reform 8  
campaign funding 7  
carbon dioxide emissions 47  
carbon emissions 47  
Carbon Tax 62  
careers, non-traditional 11  
carpooling 45  
censorship 37  
charter schools 28  
chemical and biological weapons 12  
childcare 10  
Children's Parliaments 9  
children's programs 10  
citizen dividend 61  
citizen's income 61  
civic action 7  
civil liberties 25  
civil marriage 21  
civil rights 9  
Civilian Conservation Corps 11  
civilian review board 9  
class action lawsuits 24  
Clean Air Act 47  
clean energy 42  
climate change 47  
clone 54  
collective bargaining 33  
commerce 58  
commons 63  
community development banks 66  
Community involvement 10  
community radio 37  
Community Reinvestment Act 66  
community watchdog committees 25  
community-based economics 58  
Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty 12  
condom use 32  
Confederate flag 20  
conflict resolution, schools 28  
Conscientious Objector 24  
conservation 42, 64  
Consumables 58  
consumer advocacy agencies 24  
consumer co-ops 63  
consumer protection 24  
consumption 59  
contraception 14, 19  
contracting-out 34  
Convention on Biological Diversity 53  
copyleft 68  
copyright 69  
corporate charters 60  
corporate control 7

corporate tax avoidance 14  
corporate taxes 62  
corporate welfare 60, 61  
corporations in schools 28  
covert actions 12  
creating jobs 65  
criminal justice system 34  
cross-commuting 44  
Cuba, blockade 14  
cultural diversity 10  
cultural exchange 10  
curbside recycling 46  
currency trade 14

## D

day care 28  
day-care 33  
DC statehood 9  
debt service 70  
decentralize state functions 9  
decline in jobs 65  
defense budget 12  
defense technology transfer 68  
democracy multi-party 8  
depleted uranium 44  
deregulation 7, 42  
diet 30  
direct democracy 9, 63  
discrimination 18, 20  
disinvestment practices 66  
distribution of income 27  
distribution of wealth 59  
diversity 18  
domestic violence prevention 35  
drift-net fishing 56  
drip irrigation 51  
dual piping systems 51  
Durable goods 58

## E

earned income tax credit 10  
Earth Charter 12  
Earth's carrying capacity 36  
ecological footprint 48  
economic growth 58, 59  
economy, measure 59  
education 23, 27  
educational funding 28  
election day holiday 9  
Electoral College 8  
electronic voting machines 9  
employment 61  
employment programs 61  
Endangered Species Act 53  
energy 42

energy efficiency 42, 44  
energy in agriculture 52  
energy trading 42  
English-only 20  
English-only legislation 38  
entitlement benefits 70  
entitlement programs 27  
environmental crimes 25  
Environmental Impact Statements 62  
Environmental Justice 46  
environmental justice 25  
equal airtime 37  
equal pay 18  
equal rights 18, 21  
Equal Rights Amendment 18  
ESL 38  
ethics laws 8  
evictions 39  
exportation of chemicals 46  
expository agencies 8  
Extended Producer Responsibility 45

## F

factory trawlers 56  
Fair Employment and Housing Commission 40  
Fair Labor Standards Act 33  
fair-housing laws 40  
faith-based initiatives 23  
families 10  
family farms 66  
family planning 14, 19, 36  
family support 27  
farmers 52  
FCC, license 37  
FDA drug approval 32  
Federal Trade Commission 67  
felons, citizenship rights 9  
fertilizer 52  
fluoridation 51  
food 52  
food irradiators 43  
Food Policy Council 52  
food security 52  
food supply 30  
food, true cost of 52  
foreign debt 14  
foreign investment 14  
foreign military bases 12  
foreign policy 7  
foreign relations 11  
forest products 55  
forestry practices 50  
forests 55  
fossil fuels 48  
free press 37  
free radio and TV coverage 8  
free speech 37  
Free Trade Area of the Americas 14  
freedom of religion 22  
FTAA 14  
fuel cells 43  
fuel conservation 52

fuel consumption 43  
fuel efficiency 45

## G

garbage 46  
gas 42, 43  
gay 21  
gender 21  
genetic engineering food 52  
Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) 53  
genital mutilation 21  
Genuine Progress Indicator 58  
geopolitical conflict 11  
GI Bill, new 24  
global community 10  
global warming 47  
graduated supplemental income 27  
graywater systems 49  
grazing fees 50  
green technologies 49  
greenbelts 49  
Gross Domestic Product 59  
guaranteed income 61  
gun control laws 36

## H

habitats 53, 55  
handicapped 30  
hate crimes 20, 21, 22  
HAVA 9  
Hawaiian sovereignty 21  
health care 30  
health care coverage 33  
health, safety and environment standards 14  
hemp 55  
hemp, industrial 36  
High Occupancy Vehicle lanes 45  
higher-density communities 49  
highway widening 45  
holistic health 30  
home ownership 66  
home-based education 28  
homeless 39  
homesteading 65  
hospice care 30  
housing 10, 39  
human-scale development 40  
hybrid electric designs 45  
hydrogen 43

## I

illness, causes 30  
IMF 14  
immigration 38  
incineration, toxics 46  
income inequities 61  
incubators, business 63  
Index of Social Health Indicators 58  
Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare 58  
indigenous nations 21  
indigenous plant life 53  
industrial hemp 36

industrial policies 62  
industrial wastes 51  
inequities in income 61  
inheritance tax 63  
in-home support services 22  
initiatives 9  
Instant Runoff Voting 8  
insurance costs 64  
insurance regulation 66  
Integrated Pest Management 52  
international cooperation 10  
International Criminal Court 11  
international disputes 11  
international law 11  
international security 10  
international trade 14  
international trade agreements 62  
Internet 68  
intersex 21  
investments 63  
irradiation 52  
irrigation 51  
Israel 12

## J

job banks 61  
job creation 64  
job-increasing 65  
jobs 10  
junk mail 46

## K

kanaka maoli 21  
Kyoto Climate Protocol 47

## L

labeling 54, 62  
labeling, full-disclosure 53  
labor rights 60  
labor rights, global 14  
labor, value of 61  
land ethic 49  
land mines 12  
land ownership 48  
land use decisions 44  
land use, urban 48  
landscaping 51  
land-use polices 48  
land-use policies 55  
Laws of the Sea Treaty 56  
Leave No Child Behind Act 28  
lesbian 21  
leveraged buy-outs 67  
life cycle, products 45  
lifeforms, patenting 68  
Light rail 44  
livable income 61  
living family wage 10  
living-wage jobs 27  
lobbying regulations 8  
local control 10  
local currencies 63

logging roads 55  
low-consumption communities 65  
low-income housing 39

## M

majority rule 8  
mass media 37  
mass transit 44  
media 37  
media consolidation 37  
media giants 68  
mediating institutions 7  
Medicare 30  
medicinal marijuana 30  
mentally challenged 22  
mentally ill 22, 30  
mergers and acquisitions 67  
Mexico 38  
Middle East 12  
militarization of Space 15  
militarization policy 68  
military bases, foreign 12  
military pay 24  
military, alternative service 11  
mining 49  
Mining Act of 1872 49  
Minority representation 9  
mortgage tax 63  
multi-party democracy 8

## N

NAFTA 14  
nanotechnology 69  
national debt 70  
National Endowment for the Arts 10  
National Endowment for the Humanities 10  
national health care system 31  
National Oceans Protection Act 56  
Native Americans 20  
native Hawaiian culture 21  
native species 53  
natural resource management 49  
needle exchange programs 32  
negative income tax 27, 61  
net-metering 52  
news coverage 37  
None of the Above voting 9  
non-government organizations 14  
non-monetary goods and services 59  
non-profit development corporations 65  
Non-Proliferation Treaty 12  
non-traditional careers 11  
non-violent direct action 9  
North American Free Trade Agreement 14  
nuclear power reactors 43  
nuclear waste 43  
nuclear weapons 12  
nuclear weapons complex 68

## O

ocean-going vessels 56  
oceans 56  
offshore drilling 56  
oil 42, 43  
oil exploration 43  
old growth forests 50  
open space 49, 50  
open-source software 69  
organic foods 30  
organic standards 52  
OSHA laws 34  
outsourcing 65  
over-consumption 36  
Overpopulation 52  
ozone-depleting substances 47

## P

packaging 46  
Palestine 12  
parenting 28  
parole 35  
patent rights, GMO 53  
patented medicines 32  
PATRIOT Act 15  
pay equity 19  
pedestrians 44  
pension funds 67  
pensions 33  
pesticides 52  
physically challenged 22  
playgrounds and parks 10  
Pledge of Allegiance 23  
police brutality 34  
political action 8  
political exiles 38  
political reform 8  
population 36  
poverty 26, 59  
pre-emptive invasion 11  
Price-Anderson Act 44  
primaries, state delegates 8  
prisoners 32  
prisoners rights 35  
prisoners vote 9  
prisons 34  
prisons, alternatives 35  
privacy 25  
privatization 34  
privatizing water 50  
production costs 62  
production, local 63  
profits 62  
progressive tax structure 62  
proportional representation 8  
public airwaves 37, 68  
Public Broadcasting System 37  
public financing of elections 8  
public garden plots 49  
public health 30  
public interest groups 11  
public transportation 10

## R

racial discrimination 20  
racial profiling 20, 38  
racism 20  
radiation monitoring 43  
radio 37  
radioactive wastes recycled 44  
railways 45  
rain forest beef 55  
rain forest land 55  
rape prevention 35  
recall 9  
recyclable 45  
recycled goods 46  
redistricting 9  
referendum 9  
refugees 38  
regional issues 8  
regulatory structures 7  
rehabilitation, disabled people 22  
religious rights, Native Americans 20  
remanufacturing 45  
renewable energy 42, 65  
rent control laws 39  
renters 39  
reparations 20  
reproductive choice 30  
research and development budget 68  
resource management 49  
reusable 45  
reuse 45  
revenue neutrality 63  
right of return 13

## S

salary and benefits 61  
savings and loan reform 66  
School of the Americas 12  
school vouchers 23, 28  
schools 27  
seasonal foreign workers 38  
seed banks 53  
seeds, hybrid 53  
self-determination 11, 18  
sentencing, criminal 36  
separation of church and state 22  
separation wall, West Bank 13  
Sept. 11 15  
sewage treatment systems 49  
sex education 32  
sexual harassment 18  
sexual orientation 21  
sexuality 23  
shared housing 65  
single mothers 19  
single-payer health insurance 31  
siting hazardous materials 25  
slavery 20  
small business 63, 64  
Social diversity 10  
social safety net 9  
Social Security 10, 26, 70  
soft money 8

software 69  
software patents 69  
solar photovoltaic 42  
solar power 42  
soldiers, injured 24  
Space exploration 15  
space programs 68  
Space, militarization 15  
spay and neuter clinics 54  
stakeholder capitalism 58  
statehood for DC 9  
steady state economy 59  
storm water pollution 51  
Strategic Defense Initiative 15  
street design 44  
strike, labor 33  
student loans 28  
subpoena power 9  
Superfund 46  
Superfund for Workers 58  
sustainability 58, 62  
sustainable development 11  
sustainable forestry practices 50  
sustainable livelihood 65

**T**

Taft- Hartley Act 33  
tax breaks 62  
tax code 61  
tax policy 61  
taxes 61, 62  
taxes on gasoline 45  
taxes on labor 65  
teachers 28  
Technology Assessment Office 68  
Telecommunications Act 37  
telecommunications technologies 68  
television 37  
temporary worker 38  
terminally ill 30  
Third World debt 55  
Three Strikes laws 36  
timber industries 49  
tires, burning of 46  
tires, used 46

Tobin tax 63  
Toronto treaty 12  
toxic chemicals 45  
toxic dump sites 56  
toxics use reduction 45  
trade 11  
traffic, vehicle 44  
trafficking in humans 19  
transgender 21  
transparency in government 9  
transportation policy 44  
treaties 11  
treaty obligations 20  
truck hauling 45  
True Cost Pricing 62  
Truth and Reconciliation Commission 13  
truth in advertising 24  
two-state solution 13

**U**

U.N. intervention 11  
U.N. Security Council 11  
underground aquifers 51  
undersea minerals 56  
unions 33, 65  
United Nations Charter 11  
universal basic income 61  
universal health care 31  
universal voter registration 9  
urban infill development 49  
urban land use 48  
urban sprawl 49  
USAPATRIOT Act 15  
USDA 52  
utility deregulation 42

**V**

veterans rights 23  
veterans' health programs 24  
victimless crimes 36  
violence 34  
violence to women 19  
vision-impaired voters 9  
voter registration 9  
voter-verified paper trail 9

voting machines 9  
voting machines source code 9  
Voting Rights Act 20  
vouchers, school 28

**W**

wage distribution standards 27  
war on drugs 36  
war on terrorism 25  
waste facilities 25  
waste incinerators 46  
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant 43  
wastewater treatment 51  
water 50  
water efficient appliances 51  
water subsidies 51  
water, privatization 51  
Watershed planning 50  
wealth 27  
weapons in space 68  
weapons of mass destruction 13  
Welfare Act 26  
welfare programs 26  
Western Hemisphere Institute for Security  
Cooperation 12  
whistle blowers 24  
wildlife habitat 50  
wind power 42  
women, status of 36  
women's rights 18  
work training 27  
work week 65  
worker safety 34  
working poor 10  
World Bank 14  
World Trade Organization 14  
WTO 14

**Y**

youth rights 23

**Z**

zoning ordinances 40