



**SOUTH DAKOTA**  
DEMOCRATIC PARTY

# **South Dakota Democratic Party Platform**

**Adopted by the South Dakota  
Democratic Convention**

**June 16, 2018**

## **Agriculture and Rural Life**

The South Dakota Democratic Party recognizes the importance of agriculture, not only to our farm and ranch families, but also to the entire state and nation as the source of healthy, wholesome, affordable supply of food and fiber for our citizens.

95 percent of the farms and ranches in South Dakota are independent, family-owned operations and are responsible for the care and sustainable management of over 90 percent of the taxable land in our state. The family farms and ranches of South Dakota provide not only the economic base that sustains our communities but also a proud culture and heritage for our entire state.

We, the Democratic Party:

- Recognize that improvements of family agricultural production in South Dakota are important for ongoing rural economic vitality in our state. The tools needed to achieve these ends include, but are not limited to, researching and developing value-added projects, developing producer-owned and operated cooperatives, providing programs and services that promote training and sustaining viable farm and ranch production units, and creating educational opportunities for our youth, such as 4-H, FFA, and Career and Technical Education, and improving financial aid and other programs to assist rural areas to finance and build further processing for agricultural products, rural development, renewable energy and other new projects good for South Dakota and all its citizens.
- Support family farmers and ranchers by enacting and supporting programs that keep families on the farm and/or ranch and provide support to families who want to start and/or continue farming and ranching.
- Encourage coordination of programs and relevant agencies on all levels so that food, agriculture, and natural resource conservation policies are linked together to provide appropriate private incentives to protect our state's natural resources while continuing to responsibly produce our agricultural products. An economically strong agriculture is essential to allow producers to properly manage the multiple uses of our natural resources for future generations using best management practices.
- Understand agriculture is South Dakota's number one industry; therefore, the state of South Dakota should financially support the South Dakota State Fair to sustain a valuable institution that is an integral part of our way of life.
- Encourage a coordinated, comprehensive review of water drainage regulations as they pertain to agriculture, recreation, and wildlife habitat for a coordinated management approach while respecting both landowner's property and sportsman's rights.
- Support the nationwide implementation of the conservation security program and programs of similar nature that provide monetary incentives with support for time specific easements, for farmers and ranchers to implement and maintain stewardship of South Dakota's natural resources.

## **Marketing and Competition**

- Support and encourage efforts to end monopolization and anti-competitive behavior in our agricultural markets. South Dakota needs to aggressively pursue the enforcement of the existing Packers and Stockyards Act and actively support the USDA and U.S. Department of Justice investigations into anti-competitive behavior of the livestock, poultry, dairy, and grain industries.
- Support Country of Origin Labeling for all food products. We also support a State of South Dakota Origin Labeling for all food products manufactured or produced within the state of South Dakota.
- Support the development of local food production with continued support of existing legal structures for cooperative marketing, provide mentorship for beginning cooperative marketing operations and South Dakota Department of Agriculture, and provide staff to assist development of cooperative marketing businesses. Local food production will enhance rural social fabric by increasing property ownership among rural populations, therefore increasing local government participation and financial support for school districts, fire districts, and local churches.
- Acknowledge that tribal government lands require enhanced agriculture production education, local food production and efficient distribution systems.
- Encourage all agriculture producers to use all the tools available to competitively market their products, including but not limited to the use of age and source verification programs, value-added product development, and the use of organic, grass-fed and natural product labels.
- Support the expanded marketing and usage of a high octane, low carbon, ethanol blended fuels such as E30-E50 that are available today, environmentally friendly, and meet the needs of the public fuel market.

## **Livestock Production**

- Recognize the importance of a strong brand inspection program for South Dakota and encourage impartial and transparent administration of this program for the benefit of all the stakeholders.
- Support disease prevention, eradication, and traceability programs that are developed and managed by the South Dakota Animal Industry Board and are coordinated with surrounding state and federal authorities. We do not support a federally-mandated national identification program. In aid of animal disease control & traceability, we support a voluntary, but not federally-mandated, national livestock identification program.
- Support science-based common-sense animal care and husbandry standards for livestock animals under the control of the Animal Industry Board.

## **Local Control**

- Believe that local control of planning and zoning are the rights of our state's individual counties and support the people's right to initiated measure and referendum of the rules.

- Support the right of school districts to make local decisions about the social significance of schools in our rural communities and closing their schools.

### **Agriculture Land Taxation**

- Support the full implementation of a production-based tax assessment system for agricultural land. We recognize that adjustments to the system are necessary, but adjustments should be made in a way that retains the production-based system of assessment.

### **Homegrown Fuels**

- Support the continued development and use of our homegrown, renewable fuels, including ethanol, blended ethanol such as E30-E50, biodiesel, and biomass fuels, and we support the use of these fuels in state fleet vehicles. Additionally, we encourage the expansion of alternative feed-stock sources for the production of ethanol and biodiesel.
- Strongly oppose any current or future rule changes that would or could make E16 or higher ethanol blend fuel illegal for use in non-flex fuel vehicles.
- Support expanding research for advanced uses of biofuels by-products such as but not limited to plastics, livestock feed, and fertilizer, which will lead to stronger demand and higher prices for South Dakota commodities, the creation of quality jobs, and the development of new industries that will be a considerable part of our State's future economy.
- Support the continued use and expansion of wind and solar energy development in South Dakota; including research on responsible energy storage options.

### **Infrastructure**

- Support a well-funded program for the construction and maintenance of our local infrastructure. Properly funded roads and bridges will enhance the safety of our school children on school buses and improve agriculture distribution, tourism industry, and emergency services. This infrastructure will create a more stable social and economic livelihood for all of South Dakota.
- Support a competitive and enhanced railroad system that provides timely movement of agriculture products to markets. Additionally, we support Federal Surface Transportation Board weekly status reports on movement of agriculture products by Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Canadian Pacific railroads. This will include weekly reports on backlogs of grain cars.
- Support extension of high-speed broadband access to all citizens of South Dakota.
- Support increased access to dependable cell phone services across South Dakota.

## **Economic Development and Tourism**

Economic development enhances the quality of life and standard of living of all South Dakota citizens. State policies should promote innovation and long-term growth in all sectors of the economy without diminishing our state's cultural and natural environments; a sustainable diversified economy benefits all the people of South Dakota.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- A well-educated, well-trained—and therefore highly productive—workforce that earns at least a living wage. Recognizing that education is essential for economic development, the state has a responsibility to make education on all levels a financial priority.
- Expanded affordable housing that attracts people to the state while also promoting community sustainability.
- Ensuring a healthy workforce with ready access to affordable healthcare for all people, including expanding Medicaid, which will also serve as an important economic driver to our health care industry and the entire state's economy.
- Greater cooperation with Native Americans/Tribal Nations, directed toward promoting a full range of their economic development.
- Effective investment in infrastructure, including transportation, clean energy, and telecommunications.
- Funding innovative South Dakota-based research generating results that can be applied to South Dakota's economy.
- Promotion of year-round recreational, natural, historic, artistic and cultural tourism across the entire state and regionally, nationally, and internationally.

## **Education**

Education is the greatest opportunity that we can offer the citizens of South Dakota. The quality of life in South Dakota is dependent on the quality of our education. Life-long education is crucial to our democracy, to our economic development, and to our continued growth and well-being as individuals, families, and communities. The citizens of South Dakota have the right to the best education possible.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

### **Pre-K-12 Public Education**

- A strong pre-K-12 Public Education system, including calling for funding education as mandated under the South Dakota State Constitution to be addressed first during the legislative session.
- Public dollars staying within the public education system.
- Funding for public, early childhood education.

- Providing State Aid for preK-12 education at a level that is competitive with neighboring states.
- Facilitating retention of quality teachers and staff through enhanced support for mentoring, professional development and continuing education.
- Offering all day/every day Kindergarten as part of our educational system.
- Adequate funding for all aspects of special education and mental health.
- Strengthening of art and music education in schools.

### **Post-Secondary Education Access**

- Guaranteeing equal access to all educational opportunities and improve retention, without exorbitant student debt, by adequately funding all types of higher education.
- Keeping tuition competitive with neighboring states.
- The continued success and funding of our four Technical Institutions.
- The continued development and success of the Tribal Colleges and Universities.
- Adequate funding of the public SD Universities to support highly qualified instructors, research, and student research opportunities.
- Continued funding the Opportunity Scholarship Program and Build Dakota Scholarship.
- Increased funding of a state needs-based post-secondary scholarship/loan program.
- Legislation that guarantees that each student has equal access to all educational opportunities, including alternatives, within the public educational framework.

### **Technology & Infrastructure**

- Technology initiatives to ensure all South Dakota schools have the modern technology infrastructure and support necessary to prepare our students for the 21st century global economy.

### **Employee and Student Rights**

- The right to collective bargaining with binding arbitration if an impasse occurs during negotiations for all employees of public education
- Equal rights and treatment regardless of race, ethnicity, native language, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation for all students and employees.

### **Health Care**

The health of South Dakotans is critical to the well-being of the state. Access to health care is a fundamental right regardless of geography or financial means. Health plans should provide affordable, accessible, and high-quality health care including prescription benefits to every individual in South Dakota.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- Establishing affordable universal health care for all, including providing Medicaid for those not yet covered in SD.
- Supporting the Affordable Care Act and working towards health care affordable for all Americans.
- Promoting disease prevention through the collaboration of public and private health systems.
- Advocating for community, physical, and mental wellness through the collaboration of public and private health systems,
- Promoting better health care access and services for Native Americans on and off reservations.
- Enhancing recruitment, education, and retention of health professionals and caregivers, with focus on rural needs.
- Supporting new technologies such as telehealth to improve the delivery of health care.
- Improving funding for mental and physical health care services for South Dakota's most vulnerable citizens.
- Providing equitable access to insurance coverage for all health conditions, including mental health and addictive conditions.
- Ensuring a living wage for home-based, community-based, and long-term care direct care staff as funded through increased Medicaid reimbursements.
- Providing home-based or community-based alternatives in long-term care programs that emphasize independence rather than institutionalization.
- Sustaining and strengthening Medicare without efforts to privatize.
- Ensuring access to affordable medications.
- Ensuring access to affordable, adequate, and nutritious food, as a cornerstone in of good health for all South Dakotans.
- Supporting evidence-based research into the use of alternative medical therapies for specific patient populations.
- Guaranteeing patients' rights to privacy and confidentiality.
- Guaranteeing the resources to make an informed decision in one's health care.
- Ensuring quality and the expansion of affordable mental health care and substance abuse services with emphasis on effective provider partnerships with linkage and access to care in South Dakota.
- Promoting preventive medicine to reduce long-term health care costs.
- Supporting community-based and/or judicial system funding in mental health, substance abuse treatment, and rehabilitation services to reduce incarceration.
- Providing transportation services to citizens to access health care and other services.

## **Human Rights**

The South Dakota Democratic Party is a party of inclusion. We recognize that South Dakota is a global and multicultural community. Each individual brings a special gift to the community. We prosper when we build relationships and strengthen communities. We believe in the principles of dignity, self-determination, equal opportunity, justice, and quality of life.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- A commitment to meeting every individual's basic human rights and needs.
- Promoting respect for our diverse cultures, lifestyles, spirituality, and viewpoints.
- The right to live, work, and worship without fear of discrimination.
- Equitable enforcement of laws including elimination of racial profiling.
- The separation of church and state.
- The necessity for medical providers, especially those receiving public funds, to render impartial and dignified treatment without regard to gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, age, economic status, religion, or marital status.
- Adequate state and local funding of all domestic violence shelters, sexual assault centers, transitional housing, and visitation centers.
- Quality, affordable childcare that meets nationally accepted health and safety standards.
- To the extent it is commensurate with public safety, protect the human rights and safety of offenders and juvenile offenders by providing restorative justice, through effective, compassionate and comprehensive treatment programs and reasonable alternatives to incarceration. These actions will assist the offenders and their families in a successful return to society.
- Full implementation and enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act and appropriate programs to ensure the dignity and support of persons with disabilities.
- Increasing awareness of and providing appropriate staffing and funding for the South Dakota Human Rights Commission.
- The addition of age, sexual orientation, veterans' status, and gender identity as protected classes under state employment, and housing discrimination, and public accommodation laws.
- Full equality at national, state, and local levels for all, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. Full equality includes, but is not limited to, non-discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations, marriage equality, adoption rights, and domestic partner benefits.
- Equal voting access for all citizens and eliminating obstacles that discourage voter participation. Protecting Native American voting rights by using federal education outreach funds from the Help America Vote Act.
- The belief that health medical care is a basic human right and need. We support universal health medical care and the expansion of Medicaid.
- The repeal of the death penalty.
- A secure, healthy and dignified retirement for all.
- A commitment to access to a first-class public education for every child.
- The belief that every woman should be paid the same as a man for the same work.
- The belief that every woman has the right to make her own medical decisions.
- Common sense gun safety solutions, consistent with our Second Amendment Rights.
- Full funding and strong enforcement of laws dealing with human trafficking.
- Actions to address the affordable housing shortages in our local communities and across the state.
- The right to access safe and clean drinking water for everyone.

## Labor & Employment

The South Dakota Democratic Party is committed to improving the lives of South Dakota's workers and their families. We recognize that South Dakota has the highest percentage of dual income families in the nation. We further recognize that government policies should promote full employment, good benefits, good wages, and equal treatment in the workplace.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- Continued improvement in wages and benefits, regardless of full-time, part-time, or seasonal employment status.
- A living minimum wage and continued indexing of that wage to inflation.
- The enforcement of OSHA standards.
- Continued efforts towards equal pay for equal work for all workers and opposes discrimination in the workplace.
- The recognition that organized labor is essential to improving life in South Dakota. We affirm that "Right-to-Work" laws, which are used to weaken labor and have no real bearing on the right to obtain a job, must be repealed.
- The rights of South Dakota employees/workers to participate in all aspects of the political process without employer intimidation or retribution.
- The right of South Dakota public employees to equal protection under the state public employees' bargaining statute and the right to binding arbitration in contract negotiations.
- The belief that non-dues paying bargaining unit members who benefit from union representation should pay a fair share for the cost of their representation.
- Legislation to expand the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 to include all South Dakota employees.
- An equitable unemployment compensation rate and worker's compensation benefits.
- Fair, impartial, and expeditious consideration of claims by the South Dakota Department of Labor.
- A quality workforce in South Dakota through support of continuing education, expanded training, and apprentice programs.
- The proposition that anyone working more than 40 hours per week deserves time and one half regardless of employment status.
- The development of a worker bill of rights that would be legislatively and constitutionally protected.
- The belief that the US and the State of South Dakota needs a long-term infrastructure modernization plan to increase investment, productivity, living standards, and wages for all workers including women, people of color, and LGBTQ individuals.
- Pay at or above prevailing wage and worker safety standards consistent with the Davis-Bacon Act be paid in state and municipal funded projects.
- Legislation to ensure that pregnant and nursing mothers have appropriate workplace accommodations without fear of harassment or discrimination.

- Legislation that facilitates and incentivizes development and/or purchase of firms by worker-owned cooperatives.

## **Natural Resources and Environment**

The South Dakota Democratic Party recognizes that protection of our water, air, land, and other natural resources is both essential and beneficial to responsible economic development and our quality of life. Natural resources must be managed and protected in a way that enhances our quality of life, while strengthening South Dakota's vital industries. Management and regulatory policies must recognize the need to promote sound conservation practices geared toward long-term sustainability of our natural resources. Our natural resources must be protected for present and future generations.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- Recognizing that the effects of human-caused climate change negatively impact South Dakota, and urge Federal, State, and local governments to enact policies that mitigate and reverse those effects.
- A commitment to United Nations Framework Convention's on climate change new carbon standards for coal-fired power plants
- The production and distribution of renewable energy including but not limited to wind, solar, ethanol (that is not primarily processed with fossil fuels), hydropower, and geothermal. We also encourage development of community-based and large-scale energy systems.
- The strengthening and strict enforcement of our current state and federal environmental laws. Those responsible for polluting and/or degrading the quality of South Dakota land, air, or water will be held accountable for their actions. Prompt clean-up will be conducted at the expense of the responsible parties.
- The practice of energy conservation by the state of South Dakota, local governments and South Dakotans.<sup>[1]</sup>
- A concerted effort by government, industry, and individuals to create environmentally safe and readily available ways to recycle.
- The wise and effective management of forest resources. We further encourage statewide reduction of wildland fire hazards.
- Recognition of the vital importance of clean and available drinking water and continuing development and funding of both municipal and rural water systems. We strongly encourage conservation of water throughout South Dakota and support diligent protection of our ground and surface water.
- Policies that provide enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities without damaging South Dakota's natural resources.
- Adequate funding for and access to public hunting, and fishing, and wildlife watching areas to protect South Dakota's rich heritage for future generations.
- Adequate funding to protect, preserve, and restore South Dakota's public assets, especially its lakes, parks, rivers, wetlands, forests, and grasslands. We fully support

erosion control efforts to reduce the amount of sediment entering the Missouri River reservoirs and encourage the removal of sediment that has entered, or will enter, the reservoirs.

- Conservation districts and the use of their services for the development of each community's natural resources.
- The development of renewable energy powered infrastructure for electric vehicles to mitigate the production of greenhouse gases.
- The opposition to development of large-scale fossil fuel pipelines, fracking, and uranium mining.
- The position that eminent domain shall not be allowed for transport, extraction or disposal of fossil fuels or fossil fuel products.
- The opposition to the creation of new industrial-scale gold mines in the Black Hills.
- The full availability to all data and testimony presented by any party at any public hearing or contested case hearing.
- The state and federal Endangered Species Acts.
- Reform of the 1872 Mining Law to create a legal framework in which multiple-use policy can be maintained, the federal government can receive adequate royalties, and mining companies receive leases-rather than ownership of public lands.
- The honor and protection of the sacred sites designated and documented as such by the Tribal Historic Preservation Offices and the requirement of collaboration and consensus between the Tribal and State Historic Preservation Offices.

## **Seniors**

South Dakota's seniors have always contributed their wisdom, experience, and courage to move South Dakota forward. Our seniors deserve the right to live with dignity and be treated with respect. That requires developing a flexible, economical continuum of services for productive living and lifelong learning, increasing access to more affordable prescription drugs, protecting seniors from fraud and abuse, and ensuring adequate resources for seniors with disabilities. The vitality of our seniors is sacred and should be reflected in our state priorities.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- Increased funding for Medicaid providers.
- The funding and development of a continuum of services for senior living.
- The repeal of the moratorium on nursing home beds.
- Flexibility of usage in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, home health care, and community-based services to provide care for a variety of patients' needs.
- The vigorous enforcement of ADA building codes by the State of South Dakota.
- Requiring state agencies charged with the duty of providing services to seniors to treat applicants and recipients fairly and impartially.
- Policies that protect seniors from fraud, identity theft, and elder abuse.
- Access to affordable prescription drugs.

- Funding for transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- The elderly Nutrition Program and adequate funding for its delivery.
- Strengthening the existing program for property tax relief and increasing the current eligibility income levels.
- The call for providing a living will and state advance directive registry available to all residents.
- The belief that all South Dakotans who have disabilities shall receive the same considerations as stated above.
- Lifelong learning and encourage education institutions to provide low-or no-cost educational opportunities for seniors.
- The right to end-of-life decisions which includes a person's right to die.
- Encouragement of individual savings by expanding the availability of retirement accounts through a state-managed auto-enroll retirement program for individuals who are not provided a retirement option from their employer.
- Affordable housing for seniors.
- A state managed retirement fund option for employers and employees without a retirement system.

### **State and Local Government**

The South Dakota Democratic Party believes in equitable taxation, state budgets which reflect the priorities of South Dakota and government operations that are open and participatory.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

#### **Taxation**

- A tax system which taxes all income levels fairly as allowed by the South Dakota State Constitution.
- A review of the current system of taxing property and monitoring changes that are proposed.
- The removal of sales tax on food.

#### **Expenditures**

- Providing for the proper maintenance of the state and local infrastructure.
- Full funding of public education, recognizing that education is an investment.
- Adequate support to local governments commensurate with state mandates.
- Adequate support for the State Fair, significant cultural institutions, and the arts in South Dakota.

## **Government**

- Effective and thorough oversight with the authority to keep government officials accountable and transparent, establishing and enforcing ethical standards and conflict-of-interest rules.
- Efforts to make government more efficient and more effective.
- The protection and expansion of citizen participation and the reduction of the age to run for the State Legislature from 21 to 18 years old.
- The principle of checks and balances in government and opposes unilateral executive branch decisions.
- The requirement that state government adhere to the same restrictions that it places on county and local governments.
- Requiring an independent non-partisan redistricting commission.
- Enacting rules on equitable representation on commission appointments.
- Strengthening current efforts to ensure accountability, monitoring, and oversight of programs involving local, state or federal funds.
- Intergovernmental cooperation.
- Strengthening and protecting the referral and initiated measure process.
- Protecting and supporting the Constitutionally guaranteed rights to peacefully protest.

## **Tribal Communities and Native Americans**

South Dakota is home of the Seven Council Fires which includes nine sovereign tribal nations with over 100,000 American Indians. To end the cycle of oppression we as Democrats rejoice in the richness of the history, culture, and contributions of Native Americans in South Dakota. Together, with the Lakota, Nakota, and Dakota people, we will improve educational opportunities, protect natural resources, support tribal economic development, and maintain and expand voting rights.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

## **Healthcare**

- Health care reform, including increased funding for preventive care, education that would improve quality and accessibility and ensuring that care is respectful of cultural beliefs.
- Educational programs that promote careers in healthcare on the reservations.
- Availability of counseling for victims of domestic violence, including the support of domestic violence shelters and organizations.
- The development and implementation of tribal food systems to improve the quality of life.
- Development and implementation of a Tribally approved state certified process for substance abuse and mental health programs/health care options on reservations.

## **Education**

- Providing opportunities for ongoing training for educators, particularly in best practices for educating Native American students.
- Ensuring that educators have the resources to implement best practices.
- Implementing Native American Education curriculum in all public schools
- Tribally-approved state certification process for Native American history, culture, and language instructors.
- Research for best practices and retention strategies for Native students.
- Incentives for training and recruitment of Native educators, including efforts to become highly qualified/certified teachers, and support alternative routes to certification
- Services to promote and provide post graduate career opportunities for Native American college graduates
- Efforts to protect and utilize Lakota and other protected languages, including language immersion programs. Provide equal pay for tribal language teachers.
- Support to help Native American students make a successful transition to college life at regional institutions through existing programs and establishment of new mentorship programs.
- Efforts by tribal, public and private entities to establish dropout prevention programs.

## **Tribal Colleges**

- Recognizing that Tribal Colleges have higher graduation rates and job placement rates for our Native students and asserting that the state should assist with funding for non-Native students who attend Tribal Colleges, with an increased awareness in our high schools of Tribal Colleges as an option for higher education.
- Funding the existing needs-based scholarship program

## **Voter Access**

- Using Help America Vote Act funds to establish in person early voting and voter registration satellite offices in all reservation counties.
- Providing translators for protected languages, as defined by the Voting Rights Act, must be provided at all polls in communities with a minimum of 35 percent Native American population.
- Enforcing voter protection laws.
- The unification of local municipal, state and federal polling locations with tribal polling locations on Election Day.
- The inclusion of tribal census data
- The establishment of the complete count committee at the tribal, local, and state levels in South Dakota at the upcoming census

## **Transportation**

- The existing rural transit systems on reservations and encourages development of them.
- Equitable distribution of state and federal highway funds on reservation roads

## **Law Enforcement**

- Accredited law enforcement training of state, city and county officers at tribal colleges.
- Development and implementation of domestic violence training for officers serving reservation and urban Native American communities.

## **Housing**

- Public and private programs that increase housing availability in reservation and urban native communities.

## **Trafficking**

- The efforts to end sex trafficking of Native Americans and to encourage the reporting of information regarding that effort.t
- Trauma-informed care and victim-centered services for law enforcement, health care, counseling, attorneys, and education institutions.
- The efforts of raising awareness about the prevalence of missing and murdered Indigenous Women.

## **Treaty Sovereignty**

- Greater awareness and recognition of Tribal Sovereignty and Treaty obligations at the local, state, and Federal level.

## **Veterans**

The State of South Dakota recognizes our veterans deserve efficient and compassionate, life-long care. South Dakota Democrats believe the State should take an active role to promote access to holistic care by developing an outreach program that provides communication, that actively works to connect all veterans in the state to resources, both rural and urban, and that will promote physical, mental, social, educational, and financial well-being.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- The selection of a woman veteran to be the Director of Women Veterans under the South Dakota Division of Veteran Affairs.

- The continuance of efforts to educate and inform all veterans on the outreach program for health care issues.
- Improving awareness of a Veterans' Suicide Hotline to prevent suicide among veterans.
- Improving mental health treatment for, among other issues, substance abuse, PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and Gulf War syndrome, especially depleted uranium issues.
- Improved treatment for toxins, especially Agent Orange and Air Current Trench Burner/Burn Pits.
- Coordinating and helping fund the DAV in aiding transportation needs for veterans from rural areas.
- Training for law enforcement and health care professionals on how to recognize and approach veterans with PTSD.
- Efforts to improve employment of veterans in South Dakota through such efforts as paid intern programs and the hiring of veterans in state career shortages.
- Providing educational benefits, including offering reduced cost of education and providing tuition reimbursement.
- Adding age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and veterans' status as protected classes under state employment and housing discrimination and public accommodation laws.

## **Women**

The Democratic Party is a party of equality and inclusiveness. We recognize the influence and benefits that women participating in the political process bring to our state and union. Women's rights are human rights, and we all prosper when we mutually declare our belief in the principles of dignity, self-determination, equal opportunity, justice, and quality of life for all.

The South Dakota Democratic Party supports:

- The belief that women are full partners in family, society, and all political processes.
- That South Dakota is home to women who blaze new trails to business, entrepreneurship, culture, and politics.
- That a woman has a right to choose how to use her mind, body, and time.
- Efforts to inspire, recruit, train, support, and fund progressive Democratic women to increase their numbers in the electoral process and elected and appointed positions.
- Improved policy requirements ensuring an agenda that supports lifting women and children out of poverty and ensures pay equity.
- Comprehensive programs for domestic and sexual assault survivors and age appropriate sexual violence prevention programs. This includes adequate state and local funding of domestic violence shelters, recovery programs, transitional housing, and visitation centers.
- Quality affordable childcare and early childhood development programs that meet federal, state, and local health, safety, and educational standards.
- A woman's right to make her own medical decisions. This includes receiving unrestricted information and treatment from all medical providers.

- The privacy and equality of all South Dakota women. We support contraceptive research, family planning, comprehensive family life education, and policies that support healthy child bearing. We support affordable, accessible, and comprehensive health care for women and children.
- Workplace accommodations that promote and expand quality childcare access.
- Guaranteeing women and children the freedom from all forms of sexual harassment, especially domestic abuse and sexual assault. We support strong preventative measures, including age appropriate anti-violence education.
- South Dakota's ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.
- Commitment to state law which allows breastfeeding in public.