

2006 Wyoming Democratic State Party Platform

1 **INTEGRITY IN GOVERNMENT**

2 Wyoming Democrats affirm the importance of the highest integrity at all levels of
3 government. We affirm the founding concepts of “separation of powers” and “checks and
4 balances” and oppose the corruption of those principles for partisan or personal gain.
5 Ours should be an uncompromising dedication to the rule of law, applied impartially and
6 consistently to the mighty as to the meek.

7 We support open, honest, and accountable government at all levels.

8 Wyoming Democrats decry current trends in the federal government: 1) toward
9 increasing secrecy and cronyism rather than competence in the managerial staffing of
10 agencies; 2) toward consolidation of power by any means available; and 3) away from
11 transparency and accountability in government.

12 Wyoming Democrats support the passage of and the strict enforcement of laws regulating
13 ethics and conflicts of interest as they pertain to all state and local government officials.

14 Wyoming Democrats support public financing for Federal, Statewide, and legislative
15 political campaigns; this will encourage true democracy far in excess of it’s cost and
16 reduce the influence of big money in elections and governmental decisions, both
17 legislative and administrative.

18 All other rights that we value as citizens follow from the credibility and national trust that
19 we hold in the counted results of our individual votes.

20 Wyoming Democrats oppose all voting methods that do not provide a “paper trail” for
21 each ballot cast. We oppose the disenfranchisement of qualified voters through
22 intimidation, misinformation, and development of obstacles to the free exercise of the
23 right to vote.

24 Wyoming Democrats strongly support the freedom to register and vote without
25 interference.

26 Wyoming Democrats strongly support that the repeal of the Patriot Act.

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1 Wyoming Democrats support a coordinated western presidential primary or caucus in
2 2008.

3 **THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS**

4 We affirm the right of citizens to own, bear, and keep firearms. Our Wyoming heritage
5 shows that responsible citizens' rights to bear arms should not be infringed upon.

6 **EDUCATION**

7 Our young people are the future of this state and nation. We therefore call on our policy
8 makers to address the following issues. Fund, fully and fairly, education from early
9 childhood through adult.

10 Local control of K-12 education is essential, including careful coordination of
11 construction of state-funded school facilities, with consideration to local community
12 needs, objectives and aspirations.

13 We support repealing the latest reauthorization of the Federal Elementary and Secondary
14 Education Act (ESEA), the so called "No Child Left Behind Act", in favor of a newly
15 drawn program, fully funded, of standards and practices responsive to a multicultural
16 society and individual students' needs.

17 We strongly support the purpose of the Hathaway Scholarship and Education Merit
18 Scholarship Committee and will ensure the merit provisions of the program do not
19 eliminate those students who have test-taking disabilities. We support multiple criteria
20 for determining the merit qualifications to prevent the elimination of talented, motivated
21 children who simply perform poorly on standardized tests.

22 We favor addressing all factors which affect educational performance, to include socio-
23 economic conditions, family, and special needs.

24 All education employees deserve due process protection from arbitrary termination,
25 dismissal and or suspension. The foundation of quality education is quality teachers. We

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1 strongly support Wyoming's continuing efforts to provide levels of pay and benefits for
2 teachers that will attract and retain the very best, as our children deserve.

3 We must ensure that the University of Wyoming and the community colleges are funded
4 adequately and equitably based upon the wealth of the state as opposed to the wealth of
5 the county where the community college is located.

6 We support the elimination of three-tiered graduation "endorsements." We view these
7 labels as an unnecessary and irrelevant branding.

8 **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS**

9 We support an American foreign policy based on cooperation amongst nations and
10 mutual respect of cultures and religions, and that we seek diplomatic solutions to
11 international problems through renewed support of the United Nations.

12 We reject the preemptive-war doctrine, which has alienated much of the world. Our
13 constitutional commitment to human rights and civil rights must be legally enforced
14 leading the international community by example.

15 We support the use of American economic resources in co-operation with other 1st world
16 countries to assist developing nations with economic development, education, and hope
17 for the future.

18 We support the fair International trade agreements that are based on living wages for
19 workers, protection of the environment, and respect of human rights.

20 We support the reassessment of our military's role in foreign conflicts and the assurance
21 that adequate manpower, political and financial resources are provided to meet clearly
22 defined objectives.

23 We support a phased, rapid, responsible withdrawal from Iraq, starting at the earliest
24 possible date. We condemn President Bush and his administration for its disastrous
25 planning and inept conduct of this war and for the intentional and continuing falsehoods
26 that were used to justify this war of choice.

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1 We support the closing of the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation at
2 Fort Benning, Georgia. (formerly known as the School of the Americas.)

3 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

4 The state should continue its efforts to diversify and improve the economy.

5 We encourage development of businesses and research activities in Wyoming that will
6 add substantial value to our state's resources.

7 With economic growth, care must be taken to ensure that infrastructure and quality of life
8 keep up with growth. Quality of life includes access to health care, public services,
9 cultural and recreational activities.

10 Responsible growth entails protection of our environment and must enhance the quality
11 of life.

12 We encourage state government agencies to give priority to Wyoming owned and based
13 businesses when awarding state contracts.

14 **JUSTICE IN THE WORKPLACE**

15 We believe that worker's rights must be defended including the right to organize and be
16 recognized in the private sector and all government levels.

17 We support an immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$7.00/hr with annual COLA
18 raises each year thereafter and the elimination of all exemptions such as tipping offsets.

19 We believe that exemptions to overtime payments, including interstate Commerce,
20 agriculture and others must be eliminated by state law.

21 Wyoming ranks last in safety with more deaths per capita on the job than any other state.
22 We believe that all safety laws must be vigorously enforced at the state, local and federal
23 levels. We also believe that the state OSHA must be funded at a level that ensures
24 adequate inspections.

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1 We oppose the outsourcing of jobs abroad and the tax incentives for companies to adopt
2 such practices.

3 In the interest of public and work place safety, we support the continued use of a licensed
4 locomotive engineer and a qualified conductor on the head end of every train operating
5 within the state of Wyoming.

6 We condemn Wyoming's "Employment at will" doctrine and urge passage of laws
7 requiring just-cause for job termination or discipline of Wyoming workers.

8 We reject discrimination in any form in the work place, we urge the legislature to enact
9 laws providing for gender equity and call upon both public and private sector employers
10 to commit to the necessity for equal pay for equal work.

11 Wyoming's race to the bottom of the gender wage gap has been won as we now stand
12 51st below Puerto Rico. This injustice requires immediate correction.

13 We support the repeal of Wyoming statutes 27-7-108 though 27-7-115, erroneously
14 known as the Wyoming Right-To-Work act.

15 We support legislation that requires any political subdivision within Wyoming to provide
16 compensation so that no employee is compensated below Wyoming Self-Sufficiency
17 standard.

18 In order for Wyoming workers to receive adequate wages, we urge passage of legislation
19 to establish a Wyoming Living Wage.

20 **ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE**

21 The uniform availability and provision of health care to all Wyoming people is a basic
22 human right and a government responsibility.

23 Current provision of healthcare by Medicaid and Medicare must be continued by the
24 federal government.

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1 Wyoming should address gaps in existing federal program coverage by adopting state
2 policies and programs to fill those gaps, so that every Wyoming citizen has access to
3 adequate healthcare coverage, including mental healthcare.

4 In developing Wyoming's solutions reports of the legislatively established WY Health
5 Care Commission should be used.

6 Wyoming legislators must address, implement and fund solutions for the rising costs of
7 medical insurance and address the associated health care issues these costs produce.

8 **ENVIRONMENT**

9 We support developing legislation to change existing state rules and regulations which
10 prevent the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) from entering state
11 lands to investigate environmental damages without the approval of the Wyoming Oil
12 and Gas Conservation Commission (OGCC).

13 We support developing legislation that will lead toward a coordinated environmental
14 review process for resource development projects. The review process should include the
15 OGCC, state lands, DEQ, state engineers office, Wyoming Game and Fish, Water
16 Development Commission, and other relevant agencies.

17 We support a renewed and strong commitment to the environment, vigorous enforcement
18 of laws that protect our air, water, forest, wildlife, land and people. We ask for protection
19 of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the endangered areas of Wyoming; and the
20 protection of wildlife species and their seasonal ranges and migration corridors including
21 permanent protection of Wilderness study areas and other public lands eligible for
22 wilderness designation.

23 We support recycling, including plastics, increased investment in renewable energy and
24 polices that promote energy independence, conservation and reduced global warming.

25 We support the aggressive recruitment of recycling plants to locate in Wyoming.

26 We support adequate funding of the Wyoming Wildlife Trust Fund.

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1 We support minimizing the waste of resources with the extraction of minerals, oil, natural
2 gas & coal-bed-methane, paying special attention to managing our water resources by
3 using the best available technologies.

4 We support surface owner protections for split estate mineral development.

5 We oppose the importation to Wyoming of radioactive material and the establishment of
6 radioactive waste dumps in Wyoming.

7 **PUBLIC LANDS**

8 “Public Lands in Public Hands” is our creed. We advocate that public lands remain fully
9 public and believe that they should not be sold. Wyoming’s public land heritage is one of
10 our greatest assets. Our natural resources, our beautiful landscape, our abundant wildlife
11 and the freedom of our open spaces define who we are.

12 We endorse multiple sustainable uses of appropriate public lands, including recreational
13 and productive uses and support full funding of our State Parks, National Parks and
14 Forests.

15 The Wyoming Democratic Party is committed to full implementation and maintenance of
16 the roadless rule promulgated by the U.S. Forest Service and supported by the public.

17 We call on all citizens, responsible agencies and policy makers at all levels to uphold the
18 principle of “Public Lands in Public Hands”.

19 **SOCIAL ISSUES**

20 We support the continued development and implementation of the Children and Families
21 Initiative.

22 We support the separation of church and state and oppose any preferential government
23 support of any religion. We oppose government interference in our private lives.

24 We support full reproductive choice without Government interference.

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1 We value differences among people and support equal treatment of all citizens. We
2 support passage of a state “hate crimes” statute.

3 We support prevention of all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect.
4 We need adequate shelter for victims and education programs for perpetrators of all
5 forms of abuse, and community education to identify and recognize abuse. We support
6 coordinated community response, training of law enforcement and all personnel within
7 the criminal justice system and prevention programs in public schools.

8 We support comprehensive & adequately funded programs for access to education,
9 prevention and treatment of all addictions including alcohol, tobacco, gambling,
10 prescription medication and illegal drugs including methamphetamine.

11 **SOCIAL SECURITY**

12 We strongly support the present structure of the social security system that has served us
13 well for over 70 years. We will fight to keep the system from being placed in the private
14 sector.

15 **COMMENDATIONS**

16 We commend and respect without reservation our service personnel serving and having
17 served at home and around the world in their task of defending our nation.

18 We commend those achievements of Democrats both in and out of office. Without them,
19 our policies and institutions would be greatly diminished.

20 We commend Sen. Tex Boggs, and other Wyoming legislators for providing leadership
21 and establishing the Hathaway Scholarship program

22 We commend First Lady Nancy Freudenthal for her campaign to reduce underage
23 drinking. Furthermore we commend Governor Dave & Mrs. Freudenthal for introducing
24 the creation of the Wyoming Self Sufficiency standard and for supporting the Wyoming
25 Children and Family Initiative.

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- 1 We commend all civilian support personnel in the service of our country.
- 2 We commend the Wyoming National Guard who answered the call to active duty to
- 3 Afghanistan and Iraq.
- 4 We commend the efforts of Representative Ann Robinson to repeal the Wyoming Sales
- 5 Tax on Food.