Friday, August 14, 2020

Members of the Platform Committee,

We are current and former elected Democrats from many states, representing millions of Americans. We are members of Congress, state legislators, and local officials. Like you, we are committed to the Democratic principles of equality, fairness, and democracy. We have committed our careers to advance Democratic ideals and policies. Many of us represent purple districts, where it is difficult to earn and retain elected office as a Democrat. One of us is a Democratic governor in a red state. We respect the pro-life leanings of our constituents.

We are united by three major concerns:

1. **We are concerned that many Democratic leaders support policies on abortion that are radically out of line with public opinion.** Many Democratic leaders support abortion at any time, for any reason; this position is opposed by 79% of Americans.¹ The 2016 Democratic Platform endorses taxpayer funding of abortion, opposed by a supermajority of the population.² The same platform endorses taxpayer funding of abortion in developing countries, opposed by three-fourths of voters.³

2. **We are concerned that, due to this wide disparity, the Democratic Party is alienating voters.** In 389 out of 435 Congressional districts, a majority of voters support a ban on abortion after 20 weeks.⁴ When Democratic leaders support late-term abortion, they push many voters into the arms of the Republican Party. Many people holding pro-life views are single-issue voters.⁵

3. **Finally, we are concerned about the betrayal of Democratic Party values.** An extreme position on abortion rights violates our commitment to inclusivity and diversity. Polling consistently shows that one in three Democrats are pro-life.⁶ We must respect and include these 21 million Democrats.

We support reintroducing the conscience language from 2000 into the 2020 platform, which acknowledges that Americans have differing and deeply held views on abortion.⁷ We call upon the Democratic Party to avoid divisive policies, such as passing a law in Congress defining a right to abortion ("codifying Roe v. Wade) and introducing taxpayer-funded abortion ("repealing the Hyde Amendment").

Fundamentally, we believe that every single state and county in this country deserves Democratic governance. We should not cede large swathes of the United States to the Republican Party. In the US, pro-life Democrats have been a critical part of the coalition to expand voting rights, improve health care, and pass criminal justice reform. These accomplishments would not have been possible if the Democratic Party had in place a litmus test on abortion.

We respectfully submit that the Platform Committee considers these suggestions and opens the hearings to hear the voice of innumerable elected pro-life Democrats across the United States of America.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned

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¹ 21% believe that abortion should be available to a woman any time during her entire pregnancy (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 3)
² 60% oppose using tax dollars to pay for a woman’s abortion (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 8)
³ 76% oppose or strongly oppose using tax dollars to support abortion in other countries (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 9)
⁴ CCES 2018; DFLA analysis
⁵ 30% of pro-life voters will only vote for a candidate with their views, vs. only 19% of pro-choice voters (Gallup Polling; July 2020)
⁶ 29% of Democratic voters identify as pro-life (Gallup Polling; 2019)
⁷ Suggested language: "We respect the conscience of each American and recognize that members of our party have deeply held and sometimes differing positions on issues of personal conscience, such as abortion. We recognize the diversity of views as a source of strength and we welcome all our members to participate at every level of our party."
Governors and lieutenant governors (4)

John Bel Edwards  
Governor, Louisiana

Ben Nelson  
U.S. Senator (former)  
Governor (former), Nebraska

Bill Ritter, Jr.  
Governor (former), Colorado

Samuel W. Bogley, III  
Lieutenant Governor (former), Maryland

Members of Congress (9)

Collin Peterson  
U.S. Congressman, Minnesota

Tony P. Hall  
U.S. Congressman (former), Ohio  
Ambassador to the UN Agencies for Food & Agriculture (former)  
Three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee

Dan Lipinski  
U.S. Congressman, Illinois

Bart Stupak  
U.S. Congressman (former), Michigan

Kathy Dahlkemper  
Erie County Executive, Pennsylvania  
U.S. Congresswoman (former), Pennsylvania

Lincoln Davis  
U.S. Congressman (former), Tennessee

Jim Barcia  
Bay County Executive, Michigan  
U.S. Congressman (former), Michigan

Brad Ellsworth  
U.S. Congressman (former), Indiana

Charlie Stenholm  
U.S. Congressman (former), Texas
State legislators (56)

Deborah Fellela  
State Representative and Deputy Majority Leader, Rhode Island

Roman Prezioso  
State Senator and Minority Leader, West Virginia

Malinda White  
State Representative, Louisiana

Colleen Garry  
State Representative, Massachusetts

Elizabeth Crowley  
State Senator, Rhode Island

Camille F. J. Vella-Wilkinson  
State Representative, Rhode Island

Pat Moore  
State Representative, Louisiana

Chris Tuck  
State Representative Majority Leader (former), Alaska

Gerald Boudreaux  
Senator, Louisiana

Dustin Miller  
State Representative, Louisiana

Francis Thompson  
State Representative, Louisiana

Jay Luneau  
State Senator, Louisiana

Gregory Tarver  
State Senator, Louisiana

Nathan Reitz  
State Senator, Illinois

Katrina Jackson  
State Senator, Louisiana

Regina Barrow  
State Senator, Louisiana

C. Travis Johnson  
State Representative, Louisiana

Kenny Cox  
State Representative, Louisiana

Gary Smith Jr.  
State Senator, Louisiana

Robert Phillips  
State Representative, Rhode Island

Bob Evans  
State Representative, Mississippi

Alan Silvia  
State Representative, Massachusetts

John DeBerry  
State Representative, Tennessee

Bruce Maloch  
State Senator, Arkansas

Mike Gabbard  
State Senator, Hawaii

Lawrence Brent Boggs  
State Representative, West Virginia

Eddie Lucio, Jr.  
State Representative, Texas

Harry Readshaw  
State Representative, Pennsylvania
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Driscoll</td>
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<td>State Representative</td>
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<td>Robert Plymale</td>
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<td>David Coughlin, Jr.</td>
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<td>Mack Jackson</td>
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<td>Richard Martinez</td>
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<td>Gabriel Ramos</td>
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<td>William O’Brien</td>
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<td>Raymond A. Hull</td>
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<td>Frank Lombardo</td>
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<td>Leonidas P. Raptakis</td>
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<td>Alan Gentry</td>
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<td>Joseph Sanchez</td>
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<td>Gregory Constantino</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joan Barry</td>
<td>Committee Woman</td>
<td>State Democratic Committee</td>
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<td>Daphne Campbell</td>
<td>State Senator</td>
<td>New Mexico</td>
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<td>Rebecca Hamilton</td>
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<td>Jason Frerichs</td>
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<td>Samuel Cann</td>
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<tr>
<td>William P. McKenna</td>
<td>State Representative</td>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
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</tbody>
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Local officials (32)

Monica Sparks
Kent County Commissioner, Michigan

Stormy Gage-Watts
Caddo Parish, District 7 Commissioner, Louisiana

Robbin Hamilton Watt
Majority Leader, City Council, West Haven, Connecticut

Treneé McGee
City Council, West Haven, Connecticut

Evelyn Ware Jackson
EBRPSS Board Member, District 5, Louisiana

Dr. Diane B. Evans
President, Association of Democratic County Chairs, Georgia
Candidate for State House (former), Georgia

Teresa Carroll
Secretary, Jackson DPEC, Louisiana

Rabbi Craig Miller
Member, Passaic Board of Education, New Jersey
Board member, Democrats for Life of America

Victor Celentino
County Commissioner, Ingham County, Michigan

Larry Paige
Committeeman, State Democratic Committee, Louisiana

Frank Edwards, Ill
At-Large Member, Tangipahoa DPEC, Louisiana

Robert Gillon
Chairman (former), City of Kingston Democratic Committee
Ulster County Democratic Committeeman, New York

Michael Lutz
Bay County Commissioner, District 7, Michigan

John Thomas
City Councilman, Pennsylvania

Mike Quinn
County Commissioner, Kalamazoo County, Michigan

Chuck Adams
City Attorney, City of Sheboygan, Wisconsin

John Gleason
Genesee County Clerk-Register of Deeds, Michigan

Sheldon Matthews
City Council, Saginaw, Michigan

David Donofrio
At-Large Representative South-Western City Schools, Ohio

Trey Mustian
Chairman, Jefferson Parish Democratic Executive Committee, Louisiana

Dusty Rhodes
Hamilton County Auditor, Ohio

Matthew Crawford
Democratic State Delegate, Indiana

Dylan Frick
8th Congressional District Chair, North Carolina
Jerid L. Anderson  
**State Delegate, Texas**

Howard J. Castay, Jr.  
**Candidate for State House (former)**  
**At-Large Member, St. Mary DPEC, Louisiana**

Kevin Honnell  
**Los Alamos Public Schools Board of Education (former), New Mexico**

Edwin Garcia-Arzola  
**State delegate, North Carolina**

Mark Schuering  
**Judge (former), Illinois**  
**President, Illinois Judges Association**

Joe Turnham  
**Chairman of the Alabama Democratic Party (former)**  
**Member of the DNC (former)**  
**Democratic Nominee (former), U.S. House of Representatives, Alabama**

Janet Robert  
**City Council (former), Oak Park Heights**  
**Candidate for U.S. House (former), Minnesota**

Keith McCants  
**Oglethorpe City Councilman (former), Candidate for Houston County Commissioner, Georgia**

John Bullough  
**Treasurer, City of Troy Democratic Committee**  
**Member, Rensselaer County Democratic Committee, New York**

**Democratic nominees (6)**

Dawn Barlow  
**Democratic Nominee (former), U.S. House of Representatives, Tennessee**

Jennifer Childers  
**Democratic Nominee, State House, North Carolina**

Jimmy Holbrook  
**Democratic Nominee, Chattooga County Sole Commissioner, Georgia**

Jonathan Burke  
**Democratic Nominee, State House of Representatives, Michigan**

Mike Vick  
**Democratic Nominee, State House, Indiana**

Michael McKinney  
**Democratic Nominee, State Senate, Maine**

**Total signatures: 107**

**Persons wishing to add their name may email xavier@democratsforlife.org**