

- Support non-military initiatives and policies to resolve international conflict.
- Ensure Vermont's veterans receive medical, emotional, and financial support according to their service-related disability.

#### **K. ENERGY**

Progressives believe Vermont can develop safe, secure, and stable energy sources. We will work to:

- Decommission Vermont Yankee safely with funds entirely provided by the plant owner (i.e., Entergy).
- Promote investments and job development in energy conservation and weatherization programs.
- Promote the creation of safe, clean, renewable and locally-owned power generation that includes solar, wind, geothermal, hydro, bio-mass, and on-farm sources.
- Use a fossil fuel tax to fund research, development, and infrastructure that supports clean energy.

#### **L. TRANSPORTATION**

Progressives believe Vermont's transportation system is essential to developing a vibrant statewide economy and quality of life. We will work to:

- Place a moratorium on all new major highway construction until the repair backlog (including bridges) is fulfilled.
- Support development, improvement, and access to public transportation including buses, light rail, van service, and Amtrak.
- Introduce transportation and land-use planning with incentives that promote livable, walkable access to and within communities.

#### **M. TAXES**

Progressives believe that taxes are essential to funding our social and economic needs, but should be based on one's ability to pay. We will work to:

- Eliminate Vermont's Capital Gains Tax Exemption and tax investment income at the same rate as workers' income.
- Reduce and remove residential property tax as the funding base for education.
- Revise Vermont's combined reporting corporate tax law to include overseas business organizations.

#### **N. GOVERNMENT REFORM**

Progressives believe government should work for the people, stripped of wasteful bureaucracies. Progressives will insist on fair, accountable, and representative elections. We will work to:

- Prohibit the use of all proprietary-code voting, paperless-trail voting machines
- Ensure government accountability to taxpayers for taxpayer dollars.
- Institute Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) for state and local elections.
- Institute public funding of election campaigns.
- End unlimited donor contributions to and by political parties.
- Support term limits for all elected positions from Selectman to U.S. Senator.
- Create stricter lobbying laws to close the revolving door between government and industry.

## **Vermont Progressive Party Platform**

**PREAMBLE:** The Vermont Progressive Party offers this platform to preserve and sustain democracy, guarantee inalienable rights, and promote the general welfare of the citizens of the State of Vermont.

### **OUR PEOPLE**

#### **A. HEALTHCARE**

Progressives believe health care is a human right, and support single-payer health care, birth to death, free of private corporate interests (insurance companies), provided through a non-profit, publicly financed system. We will work to:

- Implement full-spectrum single-payer health care, including preventive and mental health care.
- Establish community health centers to deliver medical and mental health care services.
- Subsidize medical school tuition at UVM for students who agree to practice in Vermont after graduation.

#### **B. EDUCATION**

Progressives believe public education is the essential and most inclusive institution in our communities which offers opportunities for all to participate. We will work to:

- Promote a public education system, Pre-K-12, that provides equal and equitable opportunities for all our children.
- Replace the residential education property tax with a progressive income tax.
- Increase the State of Vermont's share of special education funding and improve the quality of services offered.
- Reduce post secondary tuition costs for Vermonters; include free housing at VSC schools for Vermont students
- Repeal the Federal No Child Left Behind Act with its excessive emphasis on standardized testing.
- Oppose voucher programs, which undercut public education.
- Support educator efforts at fair, constructive, and comprehensive evaluation and review.

#### **C. CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Progressives are committed to public safety. We will work to:

- Invest in prevention and anti violence programs.
- Discontinue the failed "war on drugs."
- Fund drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs.
- Limit incarceration to offenders who pose a threat to public safety.
- Create effective penalties against driving under the influence to ensure public safety.
- Work to provide in-state placements and treatment (rather than out-of-state).
- Advocate for vocational and workplace training for offenders and youth at risk.
- Provide education and literacy support in all corrections settings.

## **D. CIVIL RIGHTS**

Progressives will preserve Vermont's national leadership as a champion of civil rights, in the tradition of Vermont's history as the first state to outlaw slavery. Progressives believe our right to personal privacy, as guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution, is unconditional. We will work to:

- Support marriage equity for same-sex couples.
- Ensure women's rights to control their bodies and their choices.
- Establish a Zero-Tolerance standard state-wide toward all forms of discrimination and harassment (e.g., sexual) in schools and workplaces.
- Protect the confidentiality of commercial transactions and medical information.
- Restrict the ability of the state, cities, and towns to eavesdrop on private citizens.

## **OUR COMMUNITIES**

## **E. ECONOMY**

Progressives believe that a vibrant and sustainable economy is one that recognizes preeminence of the "quality of life" concept and insists on a decent standard of living for all Vermonters. We will work to:

- Establish and guarantee that the minimum wage must be a livable wage.
- Advocate for the rights of workers to unionize and require all state contracts to be awarded only to businesses that pay a livable wage.
- Insist that Vermont will contract only with responsible employers that hire local employees
- Require that state-funded institutions buy products and services from Vermont farms and businesses wherever feasible.
- Promote cooperative, worker-owned, and publicly-owned enterprises as an alternative to huge profit-driven multinational corporations.
- Calculate the economic impact resulting from the degradation of Vermont's natural resources when evaluating the state's economic development.
- Change from Gross Domestic Product to another measure such as the Genuine Progress Indicator or Gross National Happiness indicator.
- Fight to reverse the doctrine of "corporate personhood."
- Guarantee employment opportunity at a living wage to all working-age Vermonters.
- Support the concept of a state bank.

## **F. ENVIRONMENT**

Progressives believe that Vermont's natural environment is the foundation of our health, quality of life, and economy. We will work to:

- Protect our water, air and biodiversity through strict enforcement of existing regulations, the creation of new regulations and financial incentives that reward responsible stewardship.
- Strengthen effective land-use planning policies (e.g., Act 250, Current Use Program), which support town centers, farming, forestry, and conservation.
- Promote environmentally sound use of Vermont's natural resources by supporting composting, expanding recycling, reducing hazardous waste, and restoring polluted sites to

environmental health.

- Support and develop alternative energy resources and practices, statewide mass transit, and energy efficiency programs to combat global warming/climate change.
- Create a carbon tax that is used for green projects/alternative energy.

## **G. AGRICULTURE**

Progressives know that agriculture, especially family farms, including timber, are essential to Vermont's economy and cultural heritage. We will work to:

- Support fair trade prices for Vermont's farmers and producers.
- Invest in agricultural infrastructure with priority given to locally-owned, farmer-controlled enterprises such as vegetable-, meat-, and dairy-processing plants.
- Support farm- and community-based enterprises with policies that open new markets, including direct sales to consumers.
- Support farmers' transition to organic and sustainable practices.

## **H. HOUSING**

Progressives believe a safe, affordable place to live is the birthright of every Vermonter. We will work to:

- End homelessness while supporting legal, medical, financial assistance to the homeless.
- Ensure changes to building regulations resulting in construction of affordable housing.
- Guarantee sufficient funding for Section 8 rental housing to end occupancy waiting periods.
- Protect the rights of renters
- Reduce the red tape and multiple application forms required to obtain subsidized housing from the Vermont Housing Authority.

## **I. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Progressives believe that progress in the face of multi-billion dollar corporate interests requires serious participation by people in our communities, workplaces, and schools between elections. We will work to:

Organize events in our communities and at the State House to bring out the voices of the people.

Support town meeting initiatives on vital issues.

Build coalitions with community, religious, business, union, and student organizations to support legislative initiatives.

## **OUR INSTITUTIONS**

## **J. MILITARY**

Progressives believe that, although a well-trained military is necessary for national defense, military expenditures must be weighed in the context of domestic priorities. We will work to:

- End the occupation of Iraq and the on-going military commitment in Afghanistan/Pakistan.
- Support all proceedings to hold accountable any violators of the U.S. Constitution, international laws and/or treaties.
- Restrict Vermont National Guard troops from assignment to war zones.
- Prohibit the use of torture.
- Oppose preemptive war.