

CAUCUS RESOLUTIONS

Accurate Vote Count - Fair and accurate elections are at the heart of a democracy, thus a correct vote count is the most important issue and much more critical than getting election results quickly. There is great doubt as to whether a large number of the elections of the last decade have been counted correctly. We therefore unequivocally reject electronic ballots and demand that all elections use paper ballots that are the official record of the election and that the paper ballot itself is counted, preferably in small batches at the precinct level.

Additionally, ballots must be counted twice by two separate methods and/or there must be substantial auditing of the results. Voting should not be in the hands of partisan or private for-profit enterprises. Public officials who are involved in vote counting should never play a role in political campaigns.

Voter disenfranchisement is also major issue and has affected the outcome of elections. Access to voting must be convenient for all citizens and penalties for disenfranchisement should be felonies. If voters are not able to vote due to government error then the election should be kept open until the situation is rectified.

Democracy Day - We call for election day in November be declared an official holiday to give citizens time to vote and volunteer for election duties such as vote counting.

Greater Access for Candidates and Parties - Becoming an elected official is one of the greatest forms of public service; therefore, it should be made easy for candidates and parties to gain ballot access.

The Iraq Invasion - It is an unjustifiable mistake that has nothing to do with the "War on Terror." It has made us less secure, severely damaged our economy, foreign relations, and made terrorism more likely. Given that our continued presence in Iraq may be a root cause of the violence there, our troops should be pulled out as soon as possible.

Censure, Impeachment and Trial - Constitutional integrity must be restored. Our Constitution has been rendered meaningless by the administration of George W. Bush and the inaction of Congress to enforce our laws. Bush and Dick Cheney and their administration have abused power and appear to have repeatedly violated the Constitution. They should be investigated via the impeachment process, and tried in the Senate if appropriate. Violations of the law by any government official should be investigated and officials should be tried even if they have left office. We urge Congress to enact its special powers of inherent contempt.

Universal Health Care - We support a Medicare for all plan that gives health care to all citizens and replaces for-profit insurance companies.

Bloated Military Budget - The United States spends more on its military than all other nations. There is no reason for this. We can cut the military budget substantially with no harm to our troops or national security.

Civil Liberties and Human Rights - The government is violating the rights of both citizens and non-citizens, and should be investigated. We should respect the right to privacy, civil liberties, all basic human rights and participate in treaties that protect the same. Torture should never be engaged in. No human being should be held by our government without fair and open access to the legal system. The government should not spy on citizens without a specific warrant.

Energy - Most of our major security, financial, and environmental problems are due to our wasteful and unsustainable use of polluting energies. We urgently and immediately need to pursue conservative use of energy and the use of decentralized and domestic, clean and sustainable energies that preserve our resources for the foreseeable future. Special importance must be placed on solar and wind power as well as storage technologies.

Fiscal Responsibility - Our Government is so grossly fiscally irresponsible that we are forced to sell off our assets and are leaving an unsustainable burden to unborn future generations. We are still paying for debts of two decades ago. We must restore a fair tax policy, investigate the restoration of tariffs, support domestic business, cut spending on items such as unneeded and unworkable weapons systems, cut unwarranted subsidies, and support policies that move money up through our economy rather than only supporting the richest members of society.

Media Consolidation and Internet Access - A free and open press is imperative to a free society. Competition and diversity are essential therefore large media monopolies should be broken up and the Internet must always have equal access for everyone.

International Trade Treaties - Free trade agreements such as NAFTA and CAFTA have hurt the citizens of the countries involved and have enabled corporations to bypass our laws. They should be repealed and replaced by Fair Trade Treaties.

Environment - Global climate change, pollution, and numerous other environmental problems may be the biggest crises humankind has ever faced. We must deal with these urgent issues immediately and pursue policies of rational and sustainable use of resources that maintain ecosystem integrity, species preservation, and the general health of the planet. Support of the international treaties is a move toward such policies. We need to preserve the pristine state of remaining wilderness such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and keep public lands in the trust of the public. Support of financially healthy, sustainable, and humane domestic agriculture is essential. Any pursuit of genetic manipulation should be done with the greatest precaution and no genetically engineered product should be released without extensive testing that first proves it is safe.

Education - A free quality public education that produces highly educated and skilled individuals who are able to reason and learn on their own is fundamental to a free and progressing society. The arts should be an essential part of education. No Child Left Behind should be repealed.

9/11 - There has never been a full investigation of events and actions surrounding 9/11 as the 9/11 Commission never examined many issues. A new more public investigation needs to be made with all officials testifying in public and under oath.

Campaign Finance Reform - The present system encourages corruption and closes out many worthy candidates due to the prohibitive cost. Public financing of elections will alleviate much of the problem.

Labor Rights And Government/Corporate Responsibility - A safe workplace and fair living wage is a fundamental human right. Government and businesses should be bound by labor, pension and other contracts made with employees and citizens, and must put the well being of the workers and public before profits. Excessive executive compensation should be reined in. Social Security is an essential program that should be maintained as public trust.

Government and Business Ethics - We have a culture of corruption in business and government that must be investigated and dealt with strongly. It is imperative that officials be held to the highest ethical standards and that the government should not be used for personal enrichment.

Eminent Domain - While public land is a valuable asset and resource of our society, the government should be severely restricted and generally prevented from using eminent domain to take private land to give to other private interests. Stronger consideration must be given to property owners than the owners of mineral, oil and gas rights.

Justice System - The fact that a greater percentage of our citizens are in jail than in any nation in known history and that the private prison industry is one of the fastest business sectors indicates a fundamentally broken system. We need to pursue prevention and rehabilitation rather than revenge and we must create realistic drug policy to replace the failed "War on Drugs." We need to be stricter in our choices of Judges and appoint only those uphold the Constitution and do not cater to partisan interests.

Condemnation of the Party Leadership and Congress - We hereby condemn the national Democratic Party leadership for ignoring the wishes of the majority of the Democratic electorate and for pursuing policies that are much more similar to Republican policies than those of the traditional Democratic Party. We also condemn those elected officials who do not stand up strongly against, thereby, in many cases, enabling the erosion of the American system by the Republican Party and the Bush Administration. We see the government itself is the major danger to the future of our nation and demand that the Democratic Party stand up and act in the strongest ways possible to oppose the internal threats to our country.