



Report of the Platform and Resolutions Committee April 26, 2008

The Platform and Resolutions of the South Carolina Democratic Party reflect the values and beliefs of South Carolina Democrats and shall provide guidance to Party officers, staff, candidates, and the general public as to the principles of the South Carolina Democratic Party.

1. **Resolved:** To support comprehensive early childhood intervention including full funding to implement in each of the eight plaintiff school districts in the case of Abbeville County School District, et al. v. State of South Carolina, et. al. and also to implement statewide for all children who qualify for free or reduced lunch.
2. **Resolved:** To amend the South Carolina Constitution to require an efficient, effective, safe and high quality public school system; a system of full and equitable state funding for public schools; and to oppose using tax dollars to support private K-12 schools.
3. **Resolved:** To fully fund the Education Economic Development Act.
4. **Resolved:** To provide funds for expanding its four-year-old kindergarten program to all at-risk 4 year olds.
5. **Resolved:** To unanimously ask the General Assembly to vote “no” on making the office of State Superintendent of Education a position appointed by the Governor and, should the General Assembly approve this measure, to ask the voters of South Carolina to vote “no” when this measure is on the ballot.
6. **Resolved:** To oppose any and all efforts to undermine science education in South Carolina public schools, especially through the introduction of intelligent design or creationism and to call upon the General Assembly, the Governor, and the Superintendent of Education to oppose the same.
7. **Resolved:** To urge Congress to amend the No Child Left Behind to allow the use of multiple measures to assess student learning and school effectiveness, to restore class size reduction program to give students more individualized attention, and to increase the number of highly qualified teachers in our nation’s public schools.
8. **Resolved:** To repeal Act 388 and restore property tax revenue to support school operating costs.
9. **Resolved:** To recognize the rights of parents to provide private, religious or home schooling but private education operations must be conducted with private and not public funds.
10. **Resolved:** To utilize any state general revenue surplus to improve essential services such as education and the infrastructure rather than dispersing these funds as tax revenue.
11. **Resolved:** To require DHEC have regulatory authority over all businesses that burn coal; to promote government and businesses working together for clean, renewable energy technology; to promote government promotion of conservation with incentives and tax credits; to urge all levels of government should set goals for their own renewable energy use; and to oppose the importation of high level radioactive waste into SC.
12. **Resolved:** That our state be encouraged to “go green” and implement meaningful steps to reduce the use of fossil fuels in our society and to develop alternative sources of energy.
13. **Resolved:** To oppose any effort to change or cancel the prohibition on building new roads in national park areas (put into effect during the Clinton administration).
14. **Resolved:** To oppose any laws allowing hidden loaded firearms to be brought into national or state parks.
15. **Resolved:** To support renewal of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act making it permanent.
16. **Resolved:** To protect the democratic voting process from programming error, equipment malfunction, and malicious tampering of DRE systems by installing voter verified paper records for every machine in use.

17. **Resolved:** To mandate voting machines with a paper receipt and that they be installed at all polling places, with the necessary funding.
18. **Resolved:** To support legislation making it easier for citizens to register and vote by establishing universal registration and early voting centers.
19. **Resolved:** To recommend the adoption of legislation requiring that all voting machines have a paper audit trail, that all voting machine software become the property of the people of South Carolina and open to public inspections and testing, and that no modifications to voting computers be allowed without public inspection of all the specifications of the modification, and that no modifications be allowed within one month of the election without judicial approval; and that further that the paper record is the official ballot and includes specifications concerning hardware, software source codes, which is available for public inspection, and that recounts are made in randomly selected precincts; and further to recommend that the legislation include criminal penalties and high civil fines for each violation of the recommended legislation; and that this legislation be passed as soon as possible so that it is in effect for the 2008 Presidential election cycle.
20. **Resolved:** To call upon Congress to pass legislation that mandates a secure back-up system in the event there should prove to be problems when voting electronically, which should include paper ballots that if necessary can be accessed and that this legislation needs to be passed as soon as possible so that it is in effect for the '08 Presidential Election.
21. **Resolved:** That walkways and bike ways should be encouraged by appropriate state government actions.
22. **Resolved:** To support legislation that would require the counties of South Carolina to allow their taxpayers to pay real estate taxes after the receipt of the bill in increments, without penalty.
23. **Resolved:** To request all legislative and Congressional members work to advance legislation implementing basic standards for new housing developments.
24. **Resolved:** To pass legislation that will regulate the Pay Day Lending Industry; and that no Democratic Party candidate or the Party itself takes funds from this industry.
25. **Resolved:** To be committed to eliminating the impact of special interest money on elections in our State and be it further resolved to actively support the passage of legislation providing for public financing for all statewide races and all national elections.
26. **Resolved:** To request that the General Assembly make a commitment to the health benefit of its constituency with an increase in the cigarette tax at least equal to the median among the principal tobacco-producing states with such proceeds directed to health care initiatives for those afflicted with traumas from first- or second-hand exposure to tobacco use; and remedial agriculture assistance to tobacco growers who take substantial acreage from tobacco growing and replace it with agricultural products beneficial to the population.
27. **Resolved:** To introduce and actively support state legislation that provides a "living wage," trade policies that reward work as well as wealth, and education policies that ensure the quality of opportunity in the future for South Carolina's workers; specifically, such legislation should specify that the minimum wage paid to adult workers in South Carolina shall be an amount that when annualized shall be the amount necessary to meet the poverty guidelines updated periodically in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of the Health and Human Services under the authority of 42 U.S.C. § 9902 for a person in a family or household of two people.
28. **Resolved:** To encourage lawmakers to repeal the Right to Work Act.
29. **Resolved:** To demand that a worker's right to engage in collective bargaining through organized labor not be infringed upon.
30. **Resolved:** To oppose out-sourcing state jobs to other countries.
31. **Resolved:** To support legislation that eliminates the sales tax cap on boats, cars and airplanes.
32. **Resolved:** To call for legislation adopting sentencing alternatives for nonviolent crimes.
33. **Resolved:** To support more Prison Rehabilitation and Education Programs.
34. **Resolved:** To oppose any amendments to the South Carolina Constitution that codifies discrimination in any form harming the equal treatment under law for all citizens; and to support equal and full civil rights for all citizens, including gay, lesbian, and transgender citizens.
35. **Resolved:** To fully embrace disability issues and embrace disabled who may be in need of specialized help.

36. **Resolved:** To recognize that English-only legislation is discriminatory and should not be enacted without proper funding for literacy programs for non-English speaking individuals to become proficient in the English language.
37. **Resolved:** To welcome the Hispanics and other immigrants in our midst; and encourage Hispanics and other immigrants to join our ranks; while we encourage the legal documentation of Hispanics and all immigrants to seek citizenship status; and then register to vote and become informed and productive citizens of our one America.
38. **Resolved:** To call upon the General Assembly not to allow the Governor to cut Medicaid benefits to those who so desperately rely on that help or to alter the current Medicaid system without State Legislative support.
39. **Resolved:** To support the Home Rule authority of local governments to establish and enact local land use regulations and is opposed to state mandated authority particularly with regard to the establishment of setback requirements for large, commercial poultry Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.
40. **Resolved:** To encourage a dialogue between the US and Cuba with the goal of resuming economic and diplomatic relations between the two countries.
41. **Resolved:** To strengthen State law to ensure that the definition of “public use” categories in the exercise of eminent domain be clearly defined and limited.
42. **Resolved:** To oppose “takings” or any other legislation that reduces municipal and county governments’ ability to govern in the public interest.
43. **Resolved:** To support a thorough review of existing tax structures and governing relationships for state and local governments for the purpose of restoring and even enhancing the capacity of local governing units to meet their responsibilities to the public they serve.
44. **Resolved:** To support removal of the financial burden for youthful offenders from municipalities, and that the cost of incarceration at the Department of Juvenile Justice of youthful offenders be paid by the state.
45. **Resolved:** To oppose any legislation imposing requirements in addition to those in the constitution on candidate for county offices.
46. **Resolved:** To issue a statement to elected officials of local, state, and federal government and demand openness in government.
47. **Resolved:** To oppose any increase in the state sales tax.
48. **Resolved:** To repeal the Bush tax cuts given to our wealthiest citizens.
49. **Resolved:** That the South Carolina Democratic Party call upon the U.S. Federal Government to permit and generously fund stem cell research.
50. **Resolved:** To commend the State Legislature’s passage of breastfeeding rights legislation and calls upon the State Legislature and the Governor to build upon this effort to include protections for employed mothers and to actively promote breastfeeding in the State.
51. **Resolved:** To request that the President and the Congress of the United States take action so that the war be promptly ended, that all United States armed forces be removed from Iraq, as soon as reasonably expedient, taking all necessary precautions to protect the lives of the soldiers and further be it; resolved that the use of force should always be the last option in responding to international crises after all diplomatic and other peaceful means have failed.
52. **Resolved:** To encourage the United States Congress to pass a law that would specifically prohibit the Department of Defense, the CIA, government contractors and any other agent of the United States government from using water boarding and any other forms of torture as an interrogation technique.
53. **Resolved:** To call upon the Congress of the United States to establish an independent prosecutor who will be responsible for investigating unlawful surveillance and wiretapping activities by the present administration and calls upon said prosecutor to prosecute all violations of civil liberties by the government and its representatives to the fullest extent of the law.
54. **Resolved:** To work for universal health care coverage, as reflected in HR 676, that provides single payer Universal Health Care for ALL Americans.
55. **Resolved:** To ask that elected officials at all levels of government ensure affordable, accessible, quality health care for everyone in our society.

56. **Resolved:** To request particular attention be given to preserving state funding for nutrition programs for the elderly and health insurance for children.
57. **Resolved:** To support a woman’s right to reproductive choice and the freedom to make decisions concerning her health.
58. **Resolved:** To push for improvements in military and Veteran pay, disability compensation, health care and other benefits.
59. **Resolved:** To support action for the G.I. Bill be reinstated to those soldiers whose benefits were taken after 10 years of END of TIME in Service.
60. **Resolved:** To change the S.C. Democratic Convention to be held the third weekend in April of each year so that college students may have a chance to be involved.
61. **Resolved:** To affirm our support of the Democratic National Committee’s “50 State Strategy.” Furthermore acknowledge that the DNC-funded Regional Field Directors have been indispensable in helping county parties set and meet benchmarks, organize in the field and build a broader and deeper party.
62. **Resolved:** To add that Party resolutions have a preamble that states: “The Platform and Resolutions of the South Carolina Democratic Party reflect the values and beliefs of South Carolina Democrats and shall provide guidance to Party officers, staff, candidates, and the general public as to the principles of the South Carolina Democratic Party.”
63. **Resolved:** To specifically state South Carolina Democrats have five long-term goals for our state that we believe will dramatically increase our chances of success in the global economy of the 21st century. These goals cannot be reached immediately, but we believe they are attainable within two to four years if we begin now.

We believe that education is the key to our long-term success if we don’t fix our education system, nothing else really matters. Therefore our long-term goals are:

1. **Commitment to World Class Learning-** pass a State Constitutional Amendment to establish a ‘top quality, world class’ education system instead of a ‘minimally adequate’ system as the state’s standard for public education.
2. **Ready to Learn –** create universal statewide 4 year old kindergartens with adequate support services in health and nutrition to ensure that all children are ready to learn.
3. **Unlimited Learning-** provide universal access to unlimited learning and job skills training for colleges, graduate schools or tech schools – regardless of an individual’s wealth. With a combination of financial aid, tax credits, loans and community service, everyone should be able to get all the education and job skills required to help them develop to their full potential.
4. **Universal Minimum Health Care-** ensure a minimum level of health care for everyone. There is no single best way to achieve this goal. Many states are experimenting with different methods. Two of the most promising are the universal minimum health insurance plans enacted by Republican governors in Massachusetts and California. Regardless of the specific policy formula chosen, the goal should be the same- a minimum level of healthcare for all.

The Honorable Lessie Price, Co-Chair

Attorney Matthew T. Richardson, Co-Chair