



# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REPUBLICAN PARTY

WWW.DCGOP.COM

\*\*\*\*\*

2 0 1 6   U r b a n   P l a t f o r m

of the

D.C. Republican Party

\*\*\*\*\*

ADOPTED on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of June, 2016

# T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

<i>I. Proposed DC Section of the 2016 National Republican Party Platform</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>II. Economic Growth and Opportunity</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>III. Education</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>IV. Civil and Religious Liberty</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<i>V. Housing</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<i>VI. Health and Human Services</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
<i>VII. Public Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
<i>VIII. Transportation</i>	<i>Page 8</i>

As the only entirely urban Republican Party jurisdiction with delegates to the 2016 Republican convention, the District of Columbia Republican Party (DCRP) represents the interests of Republicans in our nation's capital. The following constitutes the 2016 DCRP Platform

## **I. Proposed DC Section for the 2016 National Republican Party Platform**

---

### **Give DC the Vote!**

As the party representing the District, these are the policies and issue positions DCRP supports in connection with obtaining Federal voting representation for the capital city of the world's most powerful, democratically elected nation in the world, as well as those related to other matters concerning the rights of DC citizens to raise and spend money as they determine, to adopt and enforce local laws as they see fit, and related matters:

**Article I, Section 8, paragraph 17 of the U.S. Constitution provides that the Congress has “exclusive legislation” over the seat of the federal government. But the District has no voting representation in the Senate and only a nonvoting Delegate in the House of Representatives, like the territories. But like the several states, and unlike the territories, DC residents pay federal taxes.**

**In 1974 President Nixon and the Democratic Congress enacted the DC Home Rule Charter which delegates some governing authority to a DC Mayor and Council. Because the District of Columbia is strongly Democratic, sometimes tensions with a Republican Congress are heightened over respective powers and substantive policy issues. For example, many Democrats favor statehood for the District within its current boundaries, which would likely add a Democratic representative in the House and two Democratic U.S. Senators. Many Republicans, including those in Congress, have opposed statehood outright, but the DCRP believes there are other options to give DC taxpayers meaningful representation, while not increasing Democrats representation in Congress. House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) has suggested that DC residents who want the same rights as those of the states should seek to attach their neighborhoods to Maryland.**

**In the absence of statehood, the Congress should enact voting representation in the House of Representatives for the District, paired with an additional representative for the state next in line for an additional House seat after the 2010 census -- North Carolina, where redistricting is controlled by a Republican legislature. This law should include an early test of its constitutionality in the federal courts.**

**Unless and until the Congress decides to give DC residents the same political rights as those of the several states, its residents should be exempt from federal income tax -- no taxation without representation -- as proposed in legislation by Congressman Louis Gohmert (R-TX).**

**Much more could be done to improve the governance of the District, currently a single party government in which all the important officers are elected in the Democratic primary, disenfranchising a quarter of the DC electorate who are not Democrats. The Congress should amend the DC Home Rule Charter to require that the elections for Mayor, Council and DC Attorney General be nonpartisan.**

**DC voters should be allowed to term-limit elected officials, as approved in a 1994 initiative that the DC Council and Mayor repealed before it took effect. The Council should be stripped of its power to redistrict its own ward seats. The voters should be allowed to initiate amendments to the Charter, not just ratify amendments approved by the Council and Mayor.**

**In other actions, Congress should:**

- **Amend the DC Charter to permit the District government to spend its own revenues, so long as the budgets are balanced and the audits clean;**
- **Allow the DC Council to regulate the height of buildings, except those within the National Capital Service Area;**
- **Empower the DC government to tax nonresident income and to shift financial responsibility from the Federal to the District government for certain state like functions such as corrections and, when the DC Attorney General is elected in a non-partisan election, criminal justice;**
- **Continue to support the federally funded Tuition Assistance Grant for DC high school graduates attending college and restore the Federally funded DC Opportunity Scholarship Program, which has enhanced educational opportunities and improved graduation rates for low-income DC students in DC private, independent and parochial primary and secondary schools.**

**Our Republican Congress should hold hearings and promote legislation on these issues.**

## **II. Economic Growth and Opportunity**

Urban areas have historically been the engines of economic growth for the U.S. economy, yet today they are stifled by high taxes, overregulation, and the influence of special interests.

The GOP should work to reduce these harmful trends and improve the climate for small business and entrepreneurship by:

- Lowering the US corporate tax rate, now the highest in the industrialized world, and revising the Federal tax code to make it flatter, fairer and simpler;
- Strengthening and expanding the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit, instead of further increasing the Federal minimum wage, which Tax Credit reduces poverty and boosts employment;
- Promoting innovative economic development policies that leverage citizen creativity and entrepreneurship to expand workforce participation in the 21st century economy and thereby create clean, safe, high-wage jobs;
- Supporting and expanding enterprise zones, reducing real estate taxes, and otherwise incentivizing small businesses to start up in or relocate to economically struggling urban areas;
- Reducing the regulatory burden on small businesses such as mandated employer health insurance and paid leave, and reducing the hurdles for starting new small businesses;
- Supporting and expanding programs for education and workforce training and retraining, especially in technical areas, in order to give everyone the ability to participate and succeed in

the globalized information economy;

- Continuing to stand as responsible stewards of taxpayer funds by working to ensure that government bodies live within their budgets and advocating in support of policies which increase public transparency of Federal government expenditures;
- Balancing the Federal budget and reducing the Federal debt; and
- Eliminating the long-term structural deficit in social security, disability insurance and Medicare.

### III. Education

Decisions regarding the education of children properly belong to parents and guardians. Governments should promote educational alternatives for students and parents, including traditional public schools, public charter schools, private, independent, and parochial schools, and home schooling -- including single-sex education options.

Since the 2007 mayoral takeover of the DC Public Schools, a large and growing number of professional educators now value student achievement -- with strong evaluation systems identifying and removing ineffective teachers and rewarding and promoting effective ones -- above the special interests of unions.

The DCRP supports these policies and values in education:

- Republicans should encourage education of economically disadvantaged children in urban areas, standing against public school teachers unions that oppose the swift removal of ineffective teachers and longer school days and years.
- Public charter schools are increasingly popular in DC because they accelerate academic improvement. Republicans should oppose any attempt to unionize or overregulate these schools, ensure that they get their fair share of public funds, give them the right of first refusal when seeking to use public schools that close because of system overcapacity, and, as appropriate, co-locate high performing public charter schools within struggling, underutilized neighborhood public schools.
- Public funds in education should follow the student, whether to traditional neighborhood or charter schools, so that students are not stuck in underperforming schools. Open enrollment policies should be adopted to eliminate caps on charter and digital schools.
- There are two DC-specific, bipartisan, federally funded education programs that have worked:
  - 1) The DC Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) provides scholarships for low-income students to attend private, independent and parochial K-12 schools in DC. The OSP has increased graduation rates compared with students who did not use these scholarships. The program should be restored, expanded, and tried elsewhere; and
  - 2) The federally funded DC Tuition Assistance Grant provides scholarships to DC high school graduates. It has provided financial assistance to financially disadvantaged families and encouraged buy-in to DC public schools from middle class families, who in the past

tended to move out of the District when their children reached junior high or high school in order to be eligible for in-state tuition elsewhere. This program should be continued.

- Republicans should seek to streamline duplicative and complex postsecondary educational programs and eliminate overregulation, to provide students better access at a lower cost to taxpayers, and to emphasize skill attainment over seat time.
- DC should deploy high-quality, 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce development and job training programs, including apprenticeships, to broaden employment options for all those entitled to them, and should recognize the importance of small and medium businesses to the growth of our economy by teaching entrepreneurial and vocational skills in schools that meet the needs of our communities.
- We should include financial literacy training in our school curricula.

#### **IV. Civil and Religious Liberty**

We support amending Federal civil rights laws to include sexual orientation, marital status, and gender identity among the categories of those protected against discrimination by employers or in housing.

We also believe that government should not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion, unless a particular burden is necessary to further a compelling government interest and is the least restrictive means of doing so.

Within the DC Republican Party, there are both pro-life and pro-choice opinions. We recommend that the government seek to reduce the incidence of abortion by preventing and discouraging unwanted pregnancies and by advocating and promoting the use of adoption by all those who wish to do so and qualify.

#### **V. Housing**

Promote "housing first" for homeless persons. Applied with success in many other jurisdictions, this approach moves the homeless individual or household immediately from the streets or homeless shelters into an apartment. It is premised on the latest, persuasive evidence which shows that the other issues that may affect a homeless household *can and should be addressed once housing is obtained*.

Encourage Federal, state and local low-income housing programs which promote affordable housing by maintaining economic diversity, which in turn enables employees to live nearer where they work *and* with their families.

Reduce regulations that inhibit property owners from renting or developing their properties.

Amend the DC Home Rule Charter to empower the District to develop taller apartment buildings (other than within the National Capital Service Area), which would increase the amount, and so lower the cost, of housing in the District.

Amend the DC Home Rule Charter to prevent the District's use of eminent domain for the primary and direct benefit of private interests.

## **VI. Health and Human Services**

The DCRP supports policies and programs that:

- Enhance individual options for affordable healthcare by allowing its purchase across state lines and making health insurance portable for the individual, regardless of place of employment;
- Eliminate the disparity in tax treatment of health care plans between individuals who have employer health plans and those who do not;
- Adequately fund research on health care innovations that could lower costs, improve the quality of care, and produce better outcomes;
- Support tort reform by limiting malpractice awards, such as those for noneconomic damage based predominately on speculative or intangible evidence, with some exceptions;
- Reduce overregulation of health care facilities and providers;
- Respect constitutionally protected individual rights to healthcare, while minimizing adverse impacts on faith-based health care institutions and providers; and
- Treat drug addiction as primarily a health problem by substituting treatment for incarceration, in cases of drug possession and use, while continuing to rigorously enforce criminal laws against drug traffickers and dealers.

## **VII. Public Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness**

The DCRP supports:

- Increased Federal funding and expanded public education to combat cybersecurity threats and to reduce the vulnerability of the power grid to cyber-attacks by terrorists or others.
- An individual's constitutional right to keep and bear arms. Government should not substantially burden a person's exercise of that right, unless a particular burden is necessary to further a compelling government interest, is narrowly tailored to that interest, and is the least restrictive means of doing so.
- Continued funding of Federal grants to local law enforcement agencies but ceasing the practice of using Federal, state and local joint asset forfeiture agreements as a routine enforcement mechanism.

- We oppose the use of overly broad national security profiling and banning a group of people from entering this country purely on the basis of religion.
- We encourage community oriented policing and its more wide-spread use and deployment.

Given that marijuana is prohibited under Federal law, while many States and the District continue to experiment with medical marijuana and with its legalization and decriminalization for recreational use, we support the return of authority to prohibit or regulate marijuana to the States and the District.

At the same time, we believe Federal research concerning the health effects of marijuana should be significantly enhanced and actively pursued.

## **VIII. Transportation**

We support working with the Federal government and neighboring jurisdictions to finish the Metrorail extension to Loudon County, Virginia, to establish a permanent funding source for Washington Metropolitan Transportation Authority operations, and to greatly improve WMATA's safety and efficiency record.