Democratic Party of Wisconsin 2026 Platform

Adopted at Convention on 14 June 2026 in Madison, WI; 2486 words

Our Commitment to Democracy

We commit ourselves to a Nation and State which are democracies, where voters have unimpeded access to the ballot box and where their opinions are reflected by the representatives they elect.

The Democratic Party of Wisconsin strives to build a free, just, and strong society where all people have equal rights and opportunities to live meaningful, secure lives. We work actively for open, honest, and responsive government accountable to the needs and will of the people. We support democracy and work to prevent authoritarian rule.

Justice, Human Concerns, and Democracy

Everyone must be treated humanely.

We welcome everyone. We are the party of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our differences are a source of strength. Everyone must have equal opportunity to succeed, equal voice in government, and equal treatment under the law. We must uphold separation between government and religion. We respect everyone's religious liberties. It is vital that the right to choose beliefs and philosophies remain intact.

Every citizen is guaranteed the right to vote. We support same-day registration, multiple avenues of registration, early voting, vote by mail, automatic voter registration, drop-box voting, and making election days official holidays. We oppose onerous voter ID and documentation requirements. We have the right and duty to inspect and count all votes and to have a voter-verifiable paper ballot that guarantees accurate vote counting. The Presidential election should be determined by popular vote.

The government and the electoral process must be free of monetary corruption. We support limiting out-of-state campaign contributions and oppose unlimited political spending. The U.S. Constitution must be amended: corporations are not people and money is not speech. Wisconsin must rescind its call for an open-ended Constitutional Convention.

Empowering people in civic affairs strengthens our nation. Government must be a transparent institution that people trust, is compliant with open meetings and public records laws, and is elected through transparent, publicly funded state and national elections. We support fair, non-partisan redistricting processes and oversight of elections.

Wisconsin should allow citizen-initiated binding ballot referenda.

A primary duty of government is to ensure everyone can lead dignified, healthy, and fulfilling lives. We believe all are equal regardless of race, color, class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, occupation, national origin, disabilities, appearance, and political beliefs. We value love, commitment, stability, and the nurturing of all family members. We support marriage equality. We will work to ensure basic civil liberties are forever preserved. The ERA has been ratified and must be implemented.

The government must respect, support, and protect freedom of expression. We hold sacrosanct our civil liberties, including but not limited to freedom of speech, right to privacy, presumption of innocence, the principle of habeas corpus, and due process under law.

We will pursue legislation and cultural changes that end racial and ethnic profiling, respect Indigenous Nations' sovereignty, and ensure equality among all genders. At all levels of government, we will work for qualified representation which reflects our nation's diversity.

Marginalized groups face formidable challenges including but not limited to oppression, voter suppression, and inadequate access to nutritious food, healthcare, education, employment, and housing. We denounce all forms of violence, discrimination, and bigotry against anyone based on their identity—religious, racial, ethnic, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, or otherwise. We condemn all forms of anti-Asian, antisemitic, anti-Muslim, and anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment and violence. We believe Black lives matter.

We oppose any attempts to abrogate Tribal treaties or sovereignty.

Access to accurate information and a diversity of viewpoints are essential to empowerment. The broadcast spectrum belongs to all citizens. We support public broadcasting, community-owned and diverse local ownership of media outlets, and free and equal access to news media for all political candidates.

We support abolishing ICE and replacing it with a humane, community-based civil case management system. A comprehensive immigration reform legislative package must include a reasonable path to residency and citizenship, and a fair opportunity for current undocumented residents to achieve legal status. We support protection of immigrants against unlawful acts and inhumane treatment. Due process is imperative.

We need affordable, quality, licensed daycare centers and government support to pay for childcare. We need public health programs addressing disease prevention, substance abuse, mental health, sexual health, and firearm safety.

We must protect and expand Social Security programs for the elderly, disabled, and eligible dependents. We oppose privatizing Social Security; it threatens recipients' financial security and the stability of our economy.

Access to affordable, quality healthcare is a right. We support a single-payer system which provides universal access for individuals of all ages; promotes preventive measures; includes comprehensive dental, vision, and hearing care; provides medications and therapy; includes subsidized long-term in-home and nursing home care; and covers all physical and mental illnesses equally. Until that system is available, we support broader coverage and increased funding for the current healthcare programs on local, state, and national levels, including BadgerCare, Medicare, Medicaid, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Affordable Care Act. Wisconsin must fund healthcare and mental health services in underserved rural and urban communities.

Moral, religious, and medical decisions should be left up to the individual. Individuals should be free to make their own choices regarding reproductive care, family planning, gender-affirming healthcare, choosing death with dignity and physician-assisted end-of-life. Everyone has the right to obtain properly

and legally prescribed medications from any licensed pharmacy on a timely basis. Funding for stem-cell research should be supported on its scientific merits.

Public safety is a right. We must reform our police and justice systems. Budgeting, training, rules, and systems of oversight must fight racism, build trust, prevent police brutality, and foster safety and justice for all. Wisconsin's costly and high rate of imprisonment is racially discriminatory with no evidence it makes residents safer. We support reducing prison populations through increased use of probation, parole, and specialized courts. Divert those suffering from substance addiction and mental health issues from prison to treatment. We oppose prison privatization.

We must discourage dangerous drug use without criminalizing the user. Instead, provide rehabilitative treatment for addicted persons. We encourage non-penal sanctions for minor drug violations. Marijuana should be legal, regulated, and taxed like tobacco and alcohol.

We oppose the death penalty. We believe in equitable sentencing standards and increasing the authority of judges to modify sentences.

We support the right to bear arms for legitimate and ethical use for hunting, sport, and protection. We believe reasonable safety measures must be enacted, including:

- Ban open and unlicensed concealed carry of any weapon in public places
- Require universal background checks
- Ban the sale or possession of military weapons and ammunition
- Require a 48-hour waiting period for all gun dealer sales, including a red flag law with due process
- Limit the legal capacity of magazines
- Require that locked units be used for gun storage

Education, Labor, and Economics

We affirm the Wisconsin Idea: university research and education should benefit and improve lives beyond the classroom. Quality public education for all is critical to a healthy democracy and economy. We advocate for free preschool and K-12 public education. Increased governmental funding is essential for all levels of public education. Public funding for private schools, including voucher programs, diverts resources from and adversely impacts public schools.

America must support worker training, affordable tuition at state-supported post-secondary institutions, expanded access to grants and scholarships, and ample funding for research.

We must end the student debt crisis.

Free breakfast and lunch must be available to all K-12 students.

Students have the right to education in a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment, free from harassment and discrimination. We support funding all curriculum content and school supplies. Teacher and support staff compensation, including benefits, must keep pace with inflation and be competitive with comparable positions outside of education.

Accurate history must be taught in public schools. We support restoring and funding diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in public institutions. We oppose laws restricting discussions on race, gender and social justice.

Revenue caps on school districts and other local governments must be eliminated. State and federal governments must fully fund their mandates.

Public investment in the arts and humanities promotes healthy communities and healthy economies. We support increased funding of arts and humanities.

Equitable and affordable access to public transportation and high-speed internet must be provided in rural and urban areas.

A strong and secure state and nation depend on sound economic policy promoting and sustaining full, meaningful employment. Business, labor, and the public must work together to re-establish American jobs on American soil. We support small businesses as a means of economic growth. We must resist monopolization and outsourcing by eliminating tax breaks to employers who ship jobs overseas and creating incentives to bring jobs back to the U.S.

We support a strategic reindustrialization plan that builds domestic industrial capacity in key technologies.

The Federal Government should provide transitional jobs for all individuals who cannot find work and have no unemployment compensation.

Public and private workers have a right to a living wage, gender pay equity, safe and equitable workplaces, and secure benefits. Workers' rights to organize, bargain collectively, and strike without fear of reprisal must be restored and strengthened. Election by card check reduces employer intimidation of employees' choice of representation. Employees who benefit from union contracts should pay fair-share dues. We support public employees' rights to speedy mediation and binding arbitration of labor disputes. We support sectoral bargaining and prevailing wage laws.

Businesses must be held accountable for contracts with their employees. "Right-to-work" legislation and the hiring of strikebreakers are anathema to a strong, justly compensated workforce. Pensions and other retirement funds must be strictly safeguarded and responsibly managed through regulation. In the event of bankruptcy, workers' unpaid wages must be the first claim on remaining assets.

We support a tax system based on ability to pay. The wealthy are under-taxed. The Federal Budget must reflect responsible spending, debt management, and fair taxation. The State Legislature must tax corporations equal to or greater than the national average. Local jurisdictions must have authority to modernize their taxation systems.

Financial markets must be regulated to prevent fraud, excessive speculation, inappropriate compensation, predatory lending, and the need for taxpayer bailouts of mismanaged firms.

American companies should follow our labor and environmental laws and pay taxes for the good of all. We must protect our industries from competition against nations that tolerate unfair worker conditions and environmental degradation.

America's wealth should be measured not only by GDP and the Market but also by broad measures of well-being that incorporate factors like health, education, literacy, employment, wages, and environmental quality.

Regulation of artificial intelligence is in the public interest.

Agriculture and Environment

We must preserve responsible family farming by creating market systems that assure a fair return to both farmers and processors. True cooperatives and family-farm subsidies are essential to the economic viability and quality of life in rural areas. We support value-added agriculture which includes farming endeavors outside traditional forms of agriculture. Regulations controlling environmental pollution from agriculture, especially CAFOs, should be strengthened.

We support farming systems that are humane to animals; preserve soil, water, and forest resources; and produce wholesome, safe food for consumers. We support agricultural sustainability through growth in “buy fresh, buy local” practices. We support accurate labeling of conventional, organic, and genetically modified food.

We oppose seed producer patent enforcement that bars seed harvesting by farmers.

Federal and state funds should support the Wisconsin Local Food Purchase Assistance Program (LFPA).

Climate change poses an existential threat to life on Earth. We support aggressive action, including using the governor’s executive powers, to decarbonize our economy by 2035 to meet the global heating goals of the 2015 Paris climate agreement. Our leaders must pay heed to the scientific evidence of climate change and its many inequities.

We support responsible environmental regulations affecting open space, wilderness areas, soil conservation, forest management, industry, and toxic and hazardous waste disposal and cleanup. We must maintain the integrity of our vast freshwater supply, especially the Great Lakes and Lake Wisconsin aquifer. We support retaining and expanding publicly owned recreational lands and wilderness. We oppose the transportation of shale and tar sands oil through Wisconsin.

We must develop clean, renewable, and sustainable energy sources without relaxing regulation of nuclear energy; encourage the use of fuel-efficient and alternate-fuel vehicles; reduce urban sprawl on prime agricultural land; improve and expand local, regional, and national public transportation systems; and increase recycling and waste management while maintaining biodiversity.

We must prioritize public health, environmental protection, and the land and water treaty rights of Indigenous communities in the planning and implementation of all mining projects, including frac sand extraction. We support local public control of municipal water and sewage systems. We support re-establishment of the public intervenor's office and independent Department of Natural Resources positions.

Foreign Affairs

Ukraine must be free and returned to its pre-2014 borders.

We oppose genocide.

We stand for human rights, social and economic justice, the rule of law, and popularly adopted democratic governments worldwide. Our leaders and policies must honor international law and promote international agreements that provide groundwork for a just, prosperous, environmentally healthy, and peaceful world. Our United Nations dues must be fully paid.

We call on our government to cooperatively and effectively lead in the pursuit of global accords to improve the human condition and protect the environment. We encourage international efforts to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, discrimination, war, genocide, torture, genital mutilation, human slavery and trafficking, capital punishment, pollution, and climate change. USAID must be restored.

We oppose trade, immigration policies, and tariffs which undermine our economy, harm working people, and harm the environment.

We oppose unfettered international arms trade, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, land mines, radioactive materials in conventional munitions, ballistic missile defense systems, cluster bombs, militarization of space, and American-run or funded internment camps.

We support a military sufficiently strong to safeguard national security. We must provide for the health and well-being of members of the military during and after their service. We must not use National Guard troops in undeclared wars.

Our military budget is disproportionately large and must be reduced. We should curtail the influence of the “Military Industrial Complex”. Greater emphasis should be placed on economic development and diplomacy to achieve global security.

War is always a last resort. We must address grievances that foster terrorism, not fight wars that perpetuate them. We must abide by the Geneva Conventions.

We oppose preemptive war, including the use of drone strikes, without verified direct threat to our country.

We support refugees. We support the rights of people to seek a better life in America. Those rights extend to those fleeing the effects of climate change, political persecution, and threats to their safety.

We support restoring America’s commitment to the global community.

Conclusion

The membership of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin has crafted and adopted this platform. Our state and country will become stronger and better by following the principles herein. We expect all candidates supported by the Democratic Party to support this platform and to work to implement it.