

## **THE FLOYD COUNTY 2016 DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY**

The Floyd County Democratic Party (FCDP) believes in what Hoosiers can accomplish with a good education, a good-paying job, and stronger communities. We believe in working to ensure a high quality of life for all Hoosiers, building a government that is responsive and progressive in its approach to the challenges we face today.

**We are committed to governance marked by sound policies that are reasonable and fair, recruiting for diversity in government, increasing citizen participation by removing barriers to voting, and fighting the erosion of essential government services.**

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

- *Supporting* a sound tax policy that is fiscally responsible in order to support the best possible educational structure and community investments.
- *Committing* ourselves to enacting a transparent and balanced county budget.
- *Investing* the proceeds from the sale of Floyd Memorial Hospital in a manner that protects the principle and provides new resources for creative and visionary initiatives.

### **Ethical Standards**

- *Committing* ourselves to the highest ethical standards in our service.
- *Opposing* the use of government positions for personal gain or turning essential governmental services into private business ventures.
- *Establishing* a bipartisan Floyd County Ethics Committee, in response to ethical misconduct, in order to review complaints and ensure public accountability in the future.

### **Citizen Participation**

- *Working* to make voting easier and removing physical and/or bureaucratic impediments while supporting proven enhancements such as mail-in ballots and universal registration.
- *Reaching out* regularly to increase voter participation which was an historic low of 29% in the 2014 general election (statewide) and only 24.9% in the 2015 local municipal election.
- *Seeking* to reduce the influence of money on our political system.

**We believe in basic fairness that gives every Hoosier an equal chance to succeed through equal pay for equal work, increasing the minimum wage, fighting discrimination, and supporting the right of workers to organize.**

### **Public Education**

- *Expanding* early childhood education so that all children have an equal start.
- *Working* to increase the number of high school graduates in our state and supporting ongoing adult education both for GED and vocational training.
- *Supporting* the adequate funding of schools and the rehabilitation of school buildings in order to provide a modern state-of-the-art learning environment and to increase property values.
- *Keeping* schools under local control.
- *Increasing* the number of college graduates (Indiana currently ranks 43<sup>rd</sup>), and addressing the burdensome debt load on our college students.
- *Financing* extra-curricular youth programs to support social-emotional development and educational and economic opportunities.

### **Economic Well-Being**

- *Supporting* the right of workers to organize and collectively bargain for salaries, benefits, and workplace safety including county government employees.
- *Enacting* local responsible bidder ordinances at the municipal and county level ensuring that contractors are competing on a level playing field.
- *Advocating* for full employment at a living wage, working to increase and index the minimum wage in Indiana, and working to ensure equal pay for equal work.
- *Affirming* that the economy grows when all workers have sufficient income to buy goods and services that support local businesses.

### **Health Care**

- *Protecting* the doctor/patient relationship, and personal choice and privacy in medical decisions.
- *Resisting* all attempts to return the old system of insurance denials due to pre-existing conditions, lifetime limits, and higher premiums for women.
- *Expanding* the access to full reproductive health care for women including maternal and post-natal care, and access to medically-accurate counseling for women.
- *Reducing* Indiana's high rate of infant mortality (5<sup>th</sup> in the U.S.).

-*Supporting* community initiatives to reduce heroin and opiate abuse by supporting access to treatment, preventative health measures such as needle exchange programs, and the decriminalization of addiction.

### **Commitment to Diversity & Equality**

- Believing* that a government should look like the people it represents.
- Continuing* to actively recruit women and minorities to enter public service.
- Including* LGBT non-discrimination protections in State law and local ordinances.
- Addressing* the earnings gap between men and women (Indiana ranks a low 42<sup>nd</sup> in the country with a pay gap of 25%).
- Enhancing* the Veteran's Service Office and the Veteran's Court program to guarantee that veterans have access to the physical and mental health benefits, education, and job opportunities promised to them.

### **We believe in building a first-class infrastructure that will make Indiana's economy work.**

#### **Business Growth and Community Development**

- Building* the infrastructure necessary to support the needs of the business community: a robust work force, adequate transportation, a strong communications and utility network, and thriving commerce centers.
- Expanding* broadband services throughout Floyd County including underserved suburban and rural areas.
- Creating* a community environment that includes parks and recreation, high-quality schools, and strong arts programs that attract new businesses and new residents.

#### **Environment**

- Supporting* policies that protect our air, water, and natural resources; and rid our county of roadside trash especially non-recyclables.
- Encouraging* our state government to take a proactive role in environmental issues and provide incentives that increase the use of renewable energy and green construction.
- Making* protection of the tree canopy a priority in our county and state through enacting development standards.
- Protecting* the Solid Waste Program and efforts to expand recycling resources for disposing of business office, electronic, and hazardous household waste products.

### **Law and Public Safety**

- *Opposing* private, for-profit prisons in Indiana, and ensuring that our local jail facility meets basic safety and health standards.
- *Continuing* our support of efforts by the courts to decriminalize mental illness and provide access to treatment (Veteran's Court and Forensic Sentencing Program).
- *Working* with community organizations to support families of addicts, identify ways to increase access to treatment with proven outcomes, and reduce Indiana's incarceration rate (7<sup>th</sup> highest in the country).
- *Addressing* the violence against young women in Indiana where 1 in 6 girls is raped or sexually assaulted by the time they reach high school (Indiana ranks second highest in the nation).
- *Expanding* shelter services for people wanting to leave extreme and dangerous situations of domestic violence.

As Floyd County Democrats our commitment is to build a government recognized by its fairness and equality, opportunity, and transparency. We will be caring in our concern about the longer-term life of our community and state, making responsible decisions for both today and tomorrow. We understand that this will only happen when we also commit ourselves to be collegial and respectful in our working relationships, recognizing the need to listen to others and being willing to compromise when necessary. In addition to this platform, we also support both the State and National platforms of our party as they address the broader issues beyond the scope of this document.