



**2012**

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**Republican Platform**

**Democratic Platform**

<p><b>Marriage</b></p>	<p>“The institution of marriage is the foundation of civil society. Its success as an institution will determine our success as a nation... we believe that marriage, the union of one man and one woman must be upheld as the national standard...” ( p.31)</p> <p>“Defending marriage against an activist judiciary” (p. 10)</p>	<p>“We support marriage equality and support the movement to secure equal treatment under law for same-sex couples.” (p. 18)</p>
<p><b>Defense of Marriage Act</b></p>	<p>“Congressional Republicans took the lead in enacting the Defense of Marriage Act” (p. 10)</p> <p>“We commend the United States House of Representatives and State Attorneys General who have defended these laws when they have been attacked in the courts.” (p. 10)</p> <p>“We reaffirm our support for a Constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman.” (p. 10)</p>	<p>“We support the full repeal of the so-called Defense of Marriage Act” (p. 18)</p>
<p><b>Conscience Rights</b></p>	<p>“The most offensive instance of this war on religion has been the current Administration’s attempt to compel faith-related institutions, as well as believing individuals, to contravene their deeply held religious, moral, or ethical beliefs regarding health services, traditional marriage, or abortion. This forcible secularization of religious and religiously affiliated organizations, including faith-based hospitals and colleges, has been in tandem with the current Administration’s audacity in declaring which faith-related activities are, or are not, protected by the First Amendment – an unprecedented aggression repudiated by a unanimous Supreme Court in its Hosanna-Tabor v. EEOC decision.” (p. 12)</p> <p>“We support the ability of all organizations to provide, purchase, or enroll in healthcare coverage consistent with their religious, moral or ethical convictions without discrimination or penalty.” (p. 34)</p>	<p>“America’s leadership extends beyond our economic prosperity and military might—it is also rooted in our enduring commitment to advancing a core set of universal values. These include an individual’s freedom to speak their mind, assemble without fear, have access to information, worship as they please, and choose their own leaders. They also include dignity, tolerance, and equality among all people, and the fair and equitable administration of justice. The United States was founded upon a belief in these values, and people of every race, region, and religion around the globe have claimed these principles as their own.” (p. 29)</p> <p>“The President and the Democratic Party believe that women have a right to control their reproductive choices. Democrats support access to affordable family planning services, and President Obama and Democrats will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers. The Affordable Care Act ensures that women have access to contraception in their health insurance plans.”(p. 17)</p>

## 2012 Republican Platform



## 2012 Democratic Platform

<p><b>Hate</b></p>	<p>“We condemn the hate campaigns, threats of violence, and vandalism by proponents of same-sex marriage against advocates of traditional marriage and call for a federal investigation into attempts to deny religious believers their civil rights.” (p. 12)</p>	<p>“President Obama and the Democratic Party are committed to ensuring all Americans are treated fairly. This administration hosted the first-ever White House Conference on Bullying Prevention and we must continue our work to prevent vicious bullying of young people and support LGBT youth. The President’s record, from ending “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” in full cooperation with our military leadership, to passing the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, to ensuring same-sex couples can visit each other in the hospital, reflects Democrats’ belief that all Americans deserve the same chance to pursue happiness, earn a living, be safe in their communities, serve their country, and take care of the ones they love. The Administration has said that the word ‘family’ in immigration includes LGBT relationships in order to protect bi-national families threatened with deportation.” (p. 17)</p>
<p><b>Life/Abortion</b></p>	<p>“Faithful to the ‘self-evident’ truths enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, we assert the sanctity of human life and affirm that the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We support a human life amendment to the Constitution and endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment’s protections apply to unborn children.” (p. 13-14)</p>	<p>“The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports Roe v. Wade and a woman’s right to make decisions regarding her pregnancy, including a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay. We oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right.” (P. 18)</p>
<p><b>Taxpayer Funding of Abortion</b></p>	<p>“We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortion or fund organizations which perform or advocate it and will not fund or subsidize health care which includes abortion coverage.” (p. 13-14)</p>	<p>“President Obama and Democrats will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers. The Affordable Care Act ensures that women have access to contraception in their health insurance plans” (p. 18)</p>
<p><b>Incremental Pro-life Legislation</b></p>	<p>Republican leadership has led the effort to prohibit the barbaric practice of partial-birth abortion and permitted States to extend health care coverage to children before birth. We urge Congress to strengthen the Born Alive Infant Protection Act by enacting appropriate civil and criminal penalties on healthcare providers who fail to provide treatment and care to an infant who survives an abortion, including early induction delivery where the death of the infant is intended. We call for legislation to ban sex-selective abortions – gender discrimination in its most lethal form – and to protect from abortion unborn children who are capable of feeling pain; and we applaud U.S. House Republicans for leading the effort to protect the lives of pain-capable unborn children in the District of Columbia. We call for a ban on the use of body parts from aborted fetuses for research. (p.13-14)</p>	<p>“The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports Roe v. Wade and a woman’s right to make decisions regarding her pregnancy, including a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay. We oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right.” (P. 18)</p>

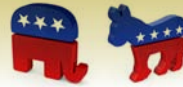
## 2012 Republican Platform



## 2012 Democratic Platform

<p><b>Euthanasia &amp; Assisted Suicide</b></p>	<p>“We oppose the non-consensual withholding or withdrawal of care or treatment, including food and water, from people with disabilities, including newborns, as well as the elderly and infirm, just as we oppose active and passive euthanasia and assisted suicide.” (p.13-14)</p>	<p>Nothing</p>
<p><b>Stem Cell Research</b></p>	<p>“We support and applaud adult stem cell research to develop lifesaving therapies, and we oppose the killing of embryos for their stem cells. We oppose federal funding of embryonic stem cell research.” (p. 13-14)</p>	<p>Nothing</p>
<p><b>Adoption</b></p>	<p>“We salute those who provide them (pregnant women) with counseling and adoption alternatives and empower them to choose life, and we take comfort in the tremendous increase in adoptions that has followed Republican legislative initiatives.” (p. 13-14)</p> <p>“Families formed or enlarged by adoption strengthen our communities and ennoble our nation. We applaud the Republican legislative initiatives that led to a significant increase in adoptions in recent years, and we call upon the private sector to consider the needs of adoptive families on a par with others. Any restructuring of the federal tax code should recognize the financial impact of the adoption process and the commitment made by adoptive families. The nation’s foster care system remains a necessary fallback for youngsters from troubled families. Because of reforms initiated by many States, the number of foster children has declined to just over 400,000. A major problem of the system is its lack of support, financial and otherwise, for teens who age out of foster care and into a world in which many are not prepared to go it alone. We urge States to work with the faith-based and other community groups which reach out to these young people in need.” (p. 32)</p>	<p>“President Obama and Democrats will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers.” (p. 18) <i>(EDITOR’S NOTE: Planned Parenthood is well known for performing record numbers of abortions with very few adoption referrals.)</i></p> <p>“The President and Democrats have cut taxes for every working American family, and expanded the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit. We believe that all parents and caregivers—regardless of gender—need more flexibility and support in the workplace. We support passing the Healthy Families Act, broadening the Family and Medical Leave Act, and partnering with states to move toward paid leave. We have invested in expanding and reforming Head Start and grants to states to raise standards and improve instruction in their early learning programs, and we support expanding the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. We must protect our most vulnerable children by supporting our foster care system, adoption programs for all caring parents, grandparents, and caregivers, and protecting children from violence and neglect. We recognize that caring for family members and managing a household is real and valuable work.” (p. 14)</p>
<p><b>Internet Gambling</b></p>	<p>“We support the prohibition of gambling over the Internet and call for reversal of the Justice Department’s decision distorting the formerly accepted meaning of the Wire Act that could open the door to Internet betting.” (p. 32)</p>	<p>Nothing</p>
<p><b>Prosecuting Pornography/ Obscenity</b></p>	<p>“We urge active prosecution against child pornography, which is closely linked to the horrors of human trafficking. Current laws on all forms of pornography and obscenity need to be vigorously enforced.” (p. 32)</p>	<p>Nothing</p>
<p><b>Education</b></p>	<p>“The Republican Party is the party of fresh and innovative ideas in education. We support options for learning, including home schooling and local innovations like single-sex classes, full-day school hours, and year-round schools. School choice – whether through charter schools, open enrollment</p>	<p>“Public education is one of our critical democratic institutions. We are committed to ensuring that every child in America has access to a world-class public education so we can out-educate the world and make sure America has the world’s highest proportion of college graduates by</p>

## 2012 Republican Platform



## 2012 Democratic Platform

<p><b>Education</b> <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>requests, college lab schools, virtual schools, career and technical education programs, vouchers, or tax credits – is important for all children, especially for families with children trapped in failing schools. Getting those youngsters into decent learning environments and helping them to realize their full potential is the greatest civil rights challenge of our time. We support the promotion of local career and technical educational programs and entrepreneurial programs that have been supported by leaders in industry and will retrain and retool the American workforce, which is the best in the world. A young person’s ability to achieve in school must be based on his or her God-given talent and motivation, not an address, zip code, or economic status.” (p. 36)</p>	<p>2020. This requires excellence at every level of our education system, from early learning through post-secondary education. It means we must close the achievement gap in America’s schools and ensure that in every neighborhood in the country, children can benefit from high-quality educational opportunities.</p> <p>This is why we have helped states and territories develop comprehensive plans to raise standards and improve instruction in their early learning programs and invested in expanding and reforming Head Start.</p> <p>President Obama and the Democrats are committed to working with states and communities so they have the flexibility and resources they need to improve elementary and secondary education in a way that works best for students. To that end, the President challenged and encouraged states to raise their standards so students graduate ready for college or career and can succeed in a dynamic global economy. Forty-six states responded, leading groundbreaking reforms that will deliver better education to millions of American students. Too many students, particularly students of color and disadvantaged students, drop out of our schools, and Democrats know we must address the dropout crisis with the urgency it deserves. The Democratic Party understands the importance of turning around struggling public schools. We will continue to strengthen all our schools and work to expand public school options for low-income youth, including magnet schools, charter schools, teacher-led schools, and career academies.</p> <p>Because there is no substitute for a great teacher at the head of a classroom, the President helped school districts save more than 400,000 educator jobs.” (p. 5)</p>
<p><b>Abstinence</b></p>	<p>“We renew our call for replacing ‘family planning’ programs for teens with abstinence education which teaches abstinence until marriage as the responsible and respected standard of behavior. Abstinence from sexual activity is the only protection that is 100 percent effective against out-of-wedlock pregnancies and sexually-transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS when transmitted sexually. It is effective, science-based, and empowers teens to achieve optimal health outcomes and avoid risks of sexual activity. We oppose school-based clinics that provide referrals, counseling, and related services for abortion and contraception. We support keeping federal funds from being used in mandatory or universal mental health, psychiatric, or socio- emotional screening programs.” (p. 36)</p>	<p>“The President and the Democratic Party believe that women have a right to control their reproductive choices. Democrats support access to affordable family planning services, and President Obama and Democrats will continue to stand up to Republican efforts to defund Planned Parenthood health centers. The Affordable Care Act ensures that women have access to contraception in their health insurance plans, and the President has respected the principle of religious liberty. Democrats support evidence-based and age-appropriate sex ed” (p. 17)</p>

## 2012 Republican Platform



## 2012 Democratic Platform

<p><b>Judicial Activism</b></p>	<p>“Despite improvements as a result of Republican nominations to the judiciary, some judges in the federal courts remain far afield from their constitutional limitations. The U.S. Constitution is the law of the land. Judicial activism which includes reliance on foreign law or unratified treaties undermines American law. The sole solution, apart from impeachment, is the appointment of constitutionalist jurists, who will interpret the law as it was originally intended rather than make it. That is both a presidential responsibility, in selecting judicial candidates, and a senatorial responsibility, in confirming them. We urge Republican Senators to do all in their power to prevent the elevation of additional leftist ideologues to the courts.” (p. 25)</p>	<p>“We will continue to fight inequalities in our criminal justice system. We believe that the death penalty must not be arbitrary. DNA testing should be used in all appropriate circumstances, defendants should have effective assistance of counsel, and the administration of justice should be fair and impartial. That’s why we enacted the Fair Sentencing Act, reducing racial disparities in sentencing for drug crimes. That’s why President Obama appointed two distinguished jurists to the Supreme Court: Justices Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor.” (p. 20)</p>
<p><b>International Religious Freedom</b></p>	<p>“It has been shunted aside by the current Administration at a time when its voice more than ever needs to be heard. Religious minorities across the Middle East are being driven from their ancient homelands, fanaticism leaves its bloody mark on both West and East Africa, and even among America’s Western friends and allies, pastors and families are penalized for their religious convictions. We will return the advocacy of religious liberty to a central place in our diplomacy.” (p. 52)</p>	<p>“Gay Rights as Human Rights. Recognizing that gay rights are human rights, the President and his administration have vowed to actively combat efforts by other nations that criminalize homosexual conduct or ignore abuse. Under the Obama administration, American diplomats must raise the issue wherever harassment or abuse arises, and they are required to record it in the State Department’s annual report on human rights. And the State Department is funding a program that finances gay rights organizations to combat discrimination, violence, and other abuses.” (p.31)</p>
<p><b>Combating Human Trafficking</b></p>	<p>“Building on the accomplishments of the last Republican Administration in implementing the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, we call for increased diplomatic efforts with foreign governments to root out complicit public officials who facilitate or perpetrate this evil. We highlight the need for greater scrutiny of overseas labor contractors to prevent the imposition of usurious terms on temporary foreign workers brought to the United States. Our government must address the increasing role of vicious drug cartels and other gangs in controlling human smuggling across our southern border. The principle underlying our Megan’s Law – publicizing the identities of known offenders – should be extended to international travel in order to protect innocent children everywhere.” (p. 46)</p>	<p>“Some 27 million women, men, and children around the world are victims of human trafficking. The President and the Democratic Party believe that trafficking in persons is both an affront to our fundamental values and, as a source of funds for transnational criminals and terrorist organization, a threat to national and international security. The Obama administration has used bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, targeted foreign assistance, training programs, public outreach, and law enforcement to combat trafficking in persons across the globe. The administration has continued to provide annual assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of foreign governments’ efforts to address the issue, encouraging all countries to do more and calling out countries that have failed to do enough. And the administration has provided technical assistance to improve law enforcement and grants to support grassroots prevention efforts around the world targeting sex and labor trafficking, child sex tourism, forced child labor, and other abuses. The administration is also committed to taking action at home to fight trafficking, including the sex trafficking of young girls.” (p. 31)</p> <p><i>(EDITOR’S NOTE: The largest combaters of human sex trafficking in the United States, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, were denied government grants for they refused to refer trafficked victims for abortions)</i></p>



<p><b>Israel</b></p>	<p>“Israel and the United States are part of the great fellowship of democracies who speak the same language of freedom and justice, and the right of every person to live in peace. The security of Israel is in the vital national security interest of the United States; our alliance is based not only on shared interests, but also shared values. We affirm our unequivocal commitment to Israel’s security and will ensure that it maintains a qualitative edge in military technology over any potential adversaries. . .</p> <p>We support Israel’s right to exist as a Jewish state with secure, defensible borders; and we envision two democratic states – Israel with Jerusalem as its capital and Palestine – living in peace and security. For that to happen, the Palestinian people must support leaders who reject terror, embrace the institutions and ethos of democracy, and respect the rule of law. . .</p> <p>We call on Arab governments throughout the region to help advance that goal. Israel should not be expected to negotiate with entities pledged to her destruction. We call on the new government in Egypt to fully uphold its peace treaty with Israel.</p> <p>The U.S. seeks a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, negotiated between the parties themselves with the assistance of the U.S., without the imposition of an artificial timetable. Essential to that process will be a just, fair, and realistic framework for dealing with the issues that can be settled on the basis of mutually agreed changes reflecting today’s realities as well as tomorrow’s hopes.” (p. 56)</p>	<p>“President Obama and the Democratic Party maintain an unshakable commitment to Israel’s security. A strong and secure Israel is vital to the United States not simply because we share strategic interests, but also because we share common values. For this reason, despite budgetary constraints, the President has worked with Congress to increase security assistance to Israel every single year since taking office, providing nearly \$10 billion in the past three years. The administration has also worked to ensure Israel’s qualitative military edge in the region. And we have deepened defense cooperation—including funding the Iron Dome system—to help Israel address its most pressing threats, including the growing danger posed by rockets and missiles emanating from the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Syria, and Iran. The President’s consistent support for Israel’s right to defend itself and his steadfast opposition to any attempt to delegitimize Israel on the world stage are further evidence of our enduring commitment to Israel’s security.</p> <p>It is precisely because of this commitment that President Obama and the Democratic Party seek peace between Israelis and Palestinians. A just and lasting Israeli-Palestinian accord, producing two states for two peoples, would contribute to regional stability and help sustain Israel’s identity as a Jewish and democratic state. At the same time, the President has made clear that there will be no lasting peace unless Israel’s security concerns are met. President Obama will continue to press Arab states to reach out to Israel. We will continue to support Israel’s peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, which have been pillars of peace and stability in the region for many years. And even as the President and the Democratic Party continue to encourage all parties to be resolute in the pursuit of peace, we will insist that any Palestinian partner must recognize Israel’s right to exist, reject violence, and adhere to existing agreements.</p> <p>Elsewhere in the region, President Obama is committed to maintaining robust security cooperation with Gulf Cooperation Council states and our other partners aimed at deterring aggression, checking Iran’s destabilizing activities, ensuring the free flow of commerce essential to the global economy, and building a regional security architecture to counter terrorism, proliferation, ballistic missiles, piracy, and other common threats. Jerusalem is and will remain the capital of Israel. The parties have agreed that Jerusalem is a matter for final status negotiations. It should remain an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths.” (p. 26)</p>
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**2012 Republican Platform****2012 Democratic Platform**

<p><b>Protecting Religious Freedom in Our Military</b></p>	<p>“We support rights of conscience and religious freedom for military chaplains and people of faith. A Republican Commander in Chief will protect religious independence of military chaplains and will not tolerate attempts to ban Bibles or religious symbols from military facilities. We will enforce and defend in court the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in the Armed Forces as well as in the civilian world.” (p. 42)</p>	<p>Nothing</p>
<p><b>Protecting U.S. Symbols</b></p>	<p>“The symbol of our constitutional unity, to which we all pledge allegiance, is the flag of the United States of America. By whatever legislative method is most feasible, Old Glory should be given legal protection against desecration. We condemn decisions by activist judges to deny children the opportunity to say the Pledge of Allegiance in its entirety, including ‘Under God,’ in public schools and encourage States to promote the pledge. We condemn the actions of those who deny our children the means by which to show respect for our great country and the constitutional principles represented by our flag.” (p. 14)</p>	<p>Nothing</p>