

**Town of Hamilton, Madison County, New York**  
**Democratic Committee**  
**REPORT ON PLATFORM MEETING**  
**July 30, 2008**

**Recommendations for the 2008 Platform of the National Democratic Party**

**1. Healthcare**

Recognizing healthcare as a basic human right and in the tradition of President Truman's 1950 proposal to finance healthcare on the same principle as Social Security, the Democratic Party supports a national single-payer health insurance system. It must cover all Americans and legal aliens employed in the United States and their dependents, with payroll contributions based on their ability to pay. Replacing Medicare, including Medicare Part D, Medicaid, and employer-sponsored private group-insurance plans, it will improve the nation's health with universal coverage at a radically reduced per capita cost and increase the competitiveness of American business in the global economy.

**2. Energy Policy and Climate Change**

We support Al Gore's vision of making our country energy independent in order to move toward resolving our economic, environmental, and national security crises. To be responsible stewards of planet Earth, we must seek energy sources that do not contribute to climate change and environmental pollution. We must increase our reliance on carbon-neutral and non-carbon sources of energy. We must avoid short-term solutions that may actually contribute to our long-term environmental crisis (e.g., off-shore drilling).

**3. Ethics and Political Reform**

Political reform is vital for the recovery of democracy and ethical behavior in the United States. We urge: the liberation of government from the overweening power of money and the influence of profit-oriented lobbies; the restraint and elimination of gerrymandered Congressional districts through disciplinary acts of Congress; the public funding of Congressional and Presidential elections; free air-time for candidates as a condition of TV and radio broadcast licenses; the reduction of filibuster power in the Senate; Congressional activism in defending the constitution; and the formal vetting of prospective judiciary nominations as a

condition of Senate advice and consent. We urge a pro-active role of States in voter registration, and the securing for every State reliable verified voting.

#### **4. The Economy**

It is shameful that the United States, one of the richest of nations, tolerates poverty as well as a huge national financial deficit. The collapse of government regulation of banking, corporate behavior, labor rights, and the national debt has created a crisis in the national economy. We urge Congress and the President to redirect federal policies away from favoritism for the rich and toward the middle and working classes; such policies should include tax reform, trade policies that discourage outsourcing of jobs, and programs that encourage new forms of productivity (e.g., development of green energy and re-building the infrastructure). Our goal should be a healthy economy that provides every American a living wage and eliminates poverty. Regular reassessment of the federally established minimum wage is a necessary part of this effort.

#### **5. Human Rights**

The rights and dignity of every human being must be protected through maintaining the standards established by the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions, and the U.S. Constitution. The rights include: educational opportunities, privacy, *habeas corpus*, and reproductive choice, as well as basic rights to food, shelter, and healthcare. Human rights should not be limited by discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Protection of human rights in the United States at this time will require both effective immigration reform and on-going defense of civil liberties.

#### **In addition:**

There was consensus that, with more time, we would have discussed planks about:

- foreign policy.
- farm policy.
- women.
- second amendment rights to bear arms.
- shielding the Supreme Court from political influence.

We believe Obama's "Blueprint for Change" indicates important concerns in some of these areas.