

A Sample of U.S. Political Parties: Where do they Stand on Key Issues?

Cynthia Peters & Kristen McKenna



Greens	Democrats	Republicans	Libertarians
Abortion			
Support full access to abortion, with funding, for all women.	Support the right of all women to have access to safe, legal abortions if they can pay for it.	Most Republicans oppose abortions in all cases (including rape, incest, and when the mother's life is in danger).	Believe abortion should be left to each person's "conscientious consideration," and government should be kept out of the matter.
Death Penalty			
Oppose the death penalty citing racial bias, failure to deter crime, errors, and humanitarian objections.	No official position. Focus on community policing, crime prevention, and gun control.	Mostly support the death penalty, stronger sentencing, and anti-crime law enforcement.	No official position.
Free Trade			
Oppose free trade agreements, which reduce government regulation of trade and threaten labor, environmental & human rights protections.	Support free trade agreements—including the Trans-Pacific Partnership—while upholding workers' rights and environmental standards.	Support the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Envision a multilateral agreement among nations committed to the principles of open markets.	Oppose all intervention by government into the area of economics.
Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer (GLBTIQ) Equality			
Believe GLBTIQ people should have equal rights. Support 2015 Supreme Court ruling in favor of marriage equality; want more anti-hate crime laws to protect LGBTIQ community.	Believe in equal protection under the law, including for GLBTIQ people; support marriage equality.	Want marriage to be defined exclusively as the union of one man and one woman. Do not support legislation protecting GLBTIQ rights.	Do not support gay marriage equality or legislation protecting GLBTIQ rights.
Global Warming and Environment/Energy			
Support transitioning to all renewable energy; call for urgent replacement of the Kyoto Protocol with a stricter protocol for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.	Believe climate change is real. Support the Climate Action Plan, which focuses on reducing emissions and supporting a green economy.	Skeptical of global warming science. Support free market solutions such as domestic energy production of clean coal, hydro-power etc.; and support drilling for oil and natural gas.	Do not support any international treaties and do not want the government involved in regulating private enterprise or the use of resources on private property.



Greens	Democrats	Republicans	Libertarians
Health Care			
Demand universal health care: Single-payer national health insurance and choice of doctors and hospitals, with guaranteed treatment. Don't think Obamacare goes far enough to ensure health-care for all.	Enacted the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) which requires individuals to purchase private health insurance (with some government assistance for those who can't afford it) and offers tax deductions to help offset the cost.	Believe individuals should purchase private health insurance and would repeal Obamacare.	Oppose any government role in the provision of health care. Favor a free market health care system so individuals can determine the level of health insurance they want.
Military Spending and National Security			
Reduce military spending by 50% and focus more on preventative diplomacy with funds redirected into social and environmental needs.	Traditionally against increases but Obama proposed highest level of military spending since Reagan with more funds dedicated to counter terrorism.	Republicans are generally calling for increases in military spending to support missile programs, troops, and technology that will combat terrorism.	Support maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the U.S. Believe the principle of non-intervention should guide relationships between countries.
Taxes			
Support progressive taxes (where wealthier people pay higher tax rate).	Want to extend tax cuts for the middle class and raise taxes on the wealthy while reforming the tax code.	Support tax cuts across the board. Oppose raising taxes on the wealthy. Encourage businesses, and private charity to make up for government spending.	Seek to lower all taxes by eliminating government services and leaving them to the private sector.
Voter Access			
Want to restore the Voting Rights Act, enact proportional representation, repeal voter ID laws.	Want to expand access to the polls by ensuring open process, accessibility, and fair elections. Oppose voter ID legislation.	Support strict rules for voting such as requiring voters to have picture IDs. Some would repeal the 1965 Voter Rights Act.	Oppose laws that suppress voting.
Wages, Employment, and Economy			
Demand a living wage (pay that people can actually live on); believe raises in minimum wage are not enough to cover basic needs.	Support increasing the minimum wage while also supporting small businesses, strengthening consumer protections, and promoting equal pay for women.	Generally oppose raising the minimum wage because wages should be set by the free market.	Oppose government regulation over wages or employment issues and support free market capitalism.

Cynthia Peters is editor of The Change Agent and Kristen McKenna is a volunteer contributor. Sources: <www.lp.org/>, <www.gop.com/platform>, <www.democrats.org/> <www.whitehouse.gov/issues>, <www.ontheissues.org>, <www.greenparty.org>.