

# TO THE LEADERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY:

Members of the Platform Committee,

**W**e are current and former elected Democrats from many states, representing millions of Americans. We are members of Congress, state legislators, and local officials. Like you, we are committed to the Democratic principles of equality, fairness, and democracy. We have committed our careers to advancing Democratic ideals and policies. Many of us represent purple districts, where it is difficult to earn and retain elected office as a Democrat. One of us is a Democratic governor in a red state. We respect the pro-life leanings of our constituents.

We are united by three major concerns:

- **We are concerned that many Democratic leaders support policies on abortion that are radically out of line with public opinion.** Many Democratic leaders support abortion at any time, for any reason; this position is opposed by 79% of Americans.<sup>1</sup> The 2016 Democratic Platform endorses taxpayer funding of abortion, opposed by a supermajority of the population.<sup>2</sup> The same platform endorses taxpayer funding of abortion in developing countries, opposed by three-fourths of voters.<sup>3</sup>
- **We are concerned that, due to this wide disparity, the Democratic Party is alienating voters.** In 389 out of 435 Congressional districts, a majority of voters support a ban on abortion after 20 weeks.<sup>4</sup> When Democratic leaders support late-term abortion, they push many voters into the arms of the Republican Party. Many people holding pro-life views are single-issue voters.<sup>5</sup>
- **Finally, we are concerned about the betrayal of Democratic Party values.** An extreme position on abortion rights violates our commitment to inclusivity and diversity. Polling consistently shows that one in three Democrats is pro-life.<sup>6</sup> We must respect and include these 21 million Democrats.

We support reintroducing the conscience language from 2000 into the 2020 platform, which acknowledges that Americans have differing and deeply held views on abortion.<sup>7</sup> We call upon the Democratic Party to avoid divisive policies, such as passing a law in Congress defining a right to abortion (“codifying *Roe v. Wade*”) and introducing taxpayer-funded abortion (“repealing the Hyde Amendment”).

Fundamentally, we believe that every single state and county in this country deserves Democratic governance. We should not cede large swathes of the United States to the Republican Party. In the U.S., pro-life Democrats have been a critical part of the coalition to expand voting rights, improve health care, and pass criminal justice reform. These accomplishments would not have been possible if the Democratic Party had in place a litmus test on abortion.

We respectfully submit that the Platform Committee considers these suggestions and opens the hearings to hear the voice of innumerable elected pro-life Democrats across the United States of America.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned

*Note: This letter was originally addressed to the Platform Committee on August 14, 2020. We received no response.*

1. 21% believe that abortion should be available to a woman any time during her entire pregnancy (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 3). 2. 60% oppose using tax dollars to pay for a woman's abortion (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 8). 3. 76% oppose or strongly oppose using tax dollars to support abortion in other countries (Marist Poll; January 2020; p. 9). 4. CCES 2018; DFLA analysis. 5. 30% of pro-life voters will only vote for a candidate with their views, vs. only 19% of pro-choice voters (Gallup Polling; July 2020). 6. 29% of Democratic voters identify as pro-life (Gallup Polling; 2019). 7. Suggested language: “We respect the conscience of each American and recognize that members of our party have deeply held and sometimes differing positions on issues of personal conscience, such as abortion. We recognize the diversity of views as a source of strength and we welcome all our members to participate at every level of our party.”

The following organizations agree with and endorse the content of this letter:

PRO-BLACK  
PRO-LIFE



Rehumanize  
INTERNATIONAL



PRO-LIFE  
SAN FRANCISCO



NEW WAVE FEMINISTS

Senator (former), West Virginia • **William P. McKenna**, State Representative (former), Rhode Island • **Monica Sparks**, Kent County Commissioner, Michigan • **Stormy Gage-Watts**, Caddo Parish, District 7 Commissioner, Louisiana • **Robbin Hamilton Watt**, Majority Leader, City Council, West Haven, Connecticut • **Trenee McGee**, City Council, West Haven, Connecticut • **Evelyn Ware Jackson**, EBRPSS Board Member, District 5, Louisiana • **Dr. Diane B. Evans**, President, Association of Democratic County Chairs, Georgia, Candidate for State House (former), Georgia • **Teresa Carroll**, Secretary, Jackson DPEC, Louisiana • **Rabbi Craig Miller**, Member, Passaic Board of Education, New Jersey, Board member, Democrats for Life of America • **Victor Celentino**, County Commissioner, Ingham County, Michigan • **Larry Paige**, Committeeman, State Democratic Committee, Louisiana • **Frank Edwards, III**, At-Large Member, Tangipahoa DPEC, Louisiana • **Robert Gillon**, Chairman (former), City of Kingston Democratic Committee, Ulster County Democratic Committeeman, New York • **Michael Lutz**, Bay County Commissioner, District 7, Michigan • **John Thomas**, City Councilman, Pennsylvania • **Mike Quinn**, County Commissioner, Kalamazoo County, Michigan • **Chuck Adams**, City Attorney, City of Sheboygan, Wisconsin • **John Gleason**, Genesee County Clerk-Register of Deeds, Michigan • **Sheldon Matthews**, City Council, Saginaw, Michigan • **David Donofrio**, At-Large Representative South-Western City Schools, Ohio • **Trey Mustian**, Chairman, Jefferson Parish Democratic Executive Committee, Louisiana • **Dusty Rhodes**, Hamilton County Auditor, Ohio • **Matthew Crawford**, Democratic State Delegate, Indiana • **Dylan Frick**, 8th Congressional District Chair, North Carolina • **Jerid L. Anderson**, State Delegate, Texas • **Robert W. T. Short Sr.**, SWCD Director, Mountain District, Virginia • **Howard J. Castay, Jr.**, Candidate for State House (former), At-Large Member, St. Mary DPEC, Louisiana • **Kevin Honnell**, Los Alamos Public Schools Board of Education (former), New Mexico • **Edwin Garcia-Arzola**, State delegate, North Carolina • **Mark Schuering**, Judge (former), Illinois-President, Illinois Judges Association • **Joe Turnham**, Chairman of the Alabama Democratic Party (former), Member of the DNC (former), Democratic Nominee (former), U.S. House of Representatives, Alabama • **Janet Robert**, City Council (former), Oak Park Heights, Candidate for U.S. House (former), Minnesota • **Keith McCants**, Oglethorpe City Councilman (former), Candidate for Houston County Commissioner, Georgia • **John Bullough**, Treasurer, City of Troy Democratic Committee, Member, Rensselaer County Democratic Committee, New York • **Dawn Barlow**, Democratic Nominee (former), U.S. House of Representatives, Tennessee • **Jennifer Childers**, Democratic Nominee, State House, North Carolina • **Jimmy Holbrook**, Democratic Nominee, Chattooga County Sole Commissioner, Georgia • **Jonathan Burke**, Democratic Nominee, State House of Representatives, Michigan • **Mike Vick**, Democratic Nominee, State House, Indiana • **Michael McKinney**, Democratic Nominee, State Senate, Maine

Total signatures: 109

*Paid for by Democrats for Life of America. Designed by Maria Oswald.*



**John Bel Edwards**, Governor, Louisiana • **Ben Nelson** U.S. Senator (former), Governor (former), Nebraska • **Bill Ritter, Jr.**, Governor (former), Colorado • **Samuel W. Bogley, III**, Lieutenant Governor (former), Maryland • **Collin Peterson**, U.S. Congressman, Minnesota • **Dan Lipinski**, U.S. Congressman, Illinois • **Kathy Dahlkemper**, Erie County Executive, Pennsylvania, U.S. Congresswoman (former), Pennsylvania • **Jim Barcia**, Bay County Executive, Michigan, U.S. Congressman (former), Michigan • **Charlie Stenholm**, U.S. Congressman (former), Texas • **Tony P. Hall**, U.S. Congressman (former), Ohio, Ambassador to the UN Agencies for Food & Agriculture (former), Three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee • **Bart Stupak**, U.S. Congressman (former), Michigan • **Lincoln Davis**, U.S. Congressman (former), Tennessee • **Brad Ellsworth**, U.S. Congressman (former), Indiana • **Deborah Fellela**, State Representative and Deputy Majority Leader, Rhode Island • **Roman Prezioso**, State Senator and Minority Leader, West Virginia • **Katrina Jackson**, State Senator, Louisiana • **Regina Barrow**, State Senator, Louisiana • **Malinda White**, State Representative, Louisiana • **Colleen Garry**, State Representative, Massachusetts • **Elizabeth Crowley**, State Senator, Rhode Island • **Camille F. J. Vella-Wilkinson**, State Representative, Rhode Island • **Pat Moore**, State Representative, Louisiana • **Chris Tuck**, State Representative, Majority Leader (former), Alaska • **Gerald Boudreaux**, Senator, Louisiana • **Dustin Miller**, State Representative, Louisiana • **Francis Thompson**, State Representative, Louisiana • **Jay Luneau**, State Senator, Louisiana • **Gregory Tarver**, State Senator, Louisiana • **Nathan Reitz**, State Senator, Illinois • **C. Travis Johnson**, State Representative, Louisiana • **Kenny Cox**, State Representative, Louisiana • **Gary Smith Jr.**, State Senator, Louisiana • **Robert Phillips**, State Representative, Rhode Island • **Bob Evans**, State Representative, Mississippi • **Alan Silvia**, State Representative, Massachusetts • **John DeBerry**, State Representative, Tennessee • **Bruce Maloch**, State Senator, Arkansas • **Mike Gabbard**, State Senator, Hawaii • **Lawrence Brent Boggs**, State Representative, West Virginia • **Eddie Lucio, Jr.**, State Representative, Texas • **Harry Readshaw**, State Representative, Pennsylvania • **Mike Driscoll**, State Representative, Pennsylvania • **Ray Ring**, State Representative, South Dakota • **Robert Plymale**, State Senator, West Virginia • **David Coughlin, Jr.**, State Representative, Rhode Island • **Mack Jackson**, State Representative, Georgia • **Richard Martinez**, State Senator, New Mexico • **Gabriel Ramos**, State Senator, New Mexico • **Chris Harris**, State Representative, Kentucky • **William O'Brien**, State Representative, Rhode Island • **Raymond A. Hull**, State Representative, Rhode Island • **Frank Lombardo**, State Senator, Rhode Island • **Leonidas P. Raptakis**, State Senator, Rhode Island • **Alan Gentry**, State Representative, Kentucky • **Joseph Sanchez**, State Representative, New Mexico • **Gregory Constantino**, State Representative, Rhode Island • **Rubén Díaz Sr.**, State Senator, New York • **Joan Barry**, Committeewoman, State Democratic Committee, State Representative (former), Missouri • **Daphne Campbell**, State Senator (former), Florida, State Representative (former), Florida • **Rebecca Hamilton**, State Representative (former), Oklahoma • **Jason Frerichs**, State Senator and Minority Leader (former), South Dakota • **Joel Sheltroun**, State Representative (former), Michigan • **Chris Richey**, State Representative (former), Arkansas • **Phil Barry**, State Representative (former), Missouri • **Jeffery Arnold**, State Representative (former), Louisiana • **Tim Probst**, State representative (former), Washington • **Bernard LeBas**, State Representative (former), Louisiana • **Samuel Cann**, State