

A Comparison of the Kittitas County Democrat and Republican Party Policy Platforms July 2020

The following document contains language from the platforms of both parties that inform constituents about local, state and national issue positions. Where there is not exact duplication of subtitles, a general title was created in an attempt to create alignment.

Policy or Issue	Democratic Platform	Republican
Preamble	<p>This is a living document, intended to be updated every two years to state the policy positions and values of Kittitas County Democrats. The United States Constitution and the Constitution of Washington State are the key documents that detail our rights and responsibilities as citizens. We honor the precepts of the Declaration of Independence and the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States. We know the Constitution of the United States, including amendments, cannot be abridged by any state or county constitution or bylaws.</p> <p>Clear separation of Church and State is necessary for a functioning democracy.</p> <p>We hold dear mutual responsibility for what we have in common, including infrastructures and the earth we depend upon, to provide basic needs to all.</p>	<p>We the Kittitas County Republican Party affirm and support the foundational principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. These documents ensure our freedom from governmental tyranny and oppression. We support the conservative principle that the powers of government derive from the consent of the people. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land and should be interpreted as originally intended. Article 1. Section 1 of the Washington State Constitution states “All political power is inherent in the people and governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed and are established to protect individual rights”. Government’s responsibility is to serve, not rule. Therefore we support smaller, more efficient and less obtrusive government. Freedom is an essential part of what it means to be human and we unequivocally defend the rights of citizens. America is a land of opportunity but success is not guaranteed and must be earned. The key to America’s progress is the freedom, inventiveness and ambition of its people. Thus, achievement of the American Dream depends only on one’s courage and talent. Therefore we support the following principles:</p>

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<p>Agriculture</p>	<p>AGRICULTURE A variety of agricultural and related industries play an important role in our local economy, and we respect farmers as stewards of the land that sustains us. We support policies consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act in order to preserve agricultural land. We call for policies that will support and promote small local farms, further encouraging the use of organic and other sustainable practices, We support the labeling of foods that contain genetically modified products. We call for the re-evaluation of subsidy programs in light of climate impact of commodity crops and their uses, and to reduce or eliminate support for mega- or multinational corporations that “farm the government”. We support policies that ensure continued public access to public lands for recreational purposes while protecting and enhancing the environment and ecosystem. We support the end of government subsidies for the production of ethanol for use in gasoline. Our water and healthy ecosystems are a part of the public trust. We encourage practices needed to adapt to climate change and the needs of future generations. We support aggressive funding and enforcing of current safety, ecology, and environmental laws based on credible, peer-reviewed scientific research. We oppose development of irrigated farmland for utility-scale solar projects. We support the legalization of hemp for fiber and oil and its recognition as a viable agricultural crop. We support a guest worker policy to supply labor for agriculture.</p>	<p>AGRICULTURE A nation’s security and prosperity depend on its ability to supply the agricultural needs of its populace. Government must protect agriculture and oppose burdensome regulations, unfair trade practices and the usurpation of agricultural water rights. Family and small farms are major contributors to economic prosperity and must be relieved from excessive taxation, including the estate tax.</p>

<p>Climate Change and Environment</p>	<p>CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Global climate change has been scientifically shown to be exacerbated by human activity primarily through extracting, refining and burning fossil fuels. Reducing demand for this resource is a critical goal. Creating economic incentives for businesses and individuals to deploy and use energy-efficient technologies, and adherence by state and national governments to global carbon reduction targets are initial means to this end.</p> <p>Funds currently directed to benefiting fossil fuel industries should be redirected to low- and no-carbon energy sources.</p> <p>We support sound environmental protection laws and vigorous support for and enforcement of these laws. Adequate funding and oversight for responsible agencies is imperative. All wildlife (both flora and fauna), especially endangered species, should be protected and nurtured through government and private initiatives.</p> <p>Decisions regarding water resources must be based on reliable scientific information and equitable economic policy. We support working toward creative solutions for the equitable distribution of clean water resources to all citizens nationwide including traditionally undeserved populations and Native peoples.</p> <p>We urge our governments to help develop improved public transportation programs. Repair of our national transportation infrastructure is critical.</p> <p>We must establish clean, sustainable, and renewable energy sources such as geothermal, tidal and ocean wave, wind, solar, and other innovative energy technologies and research into the development of energy storage systems that makes these technologies viable.</p>	<p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>The responsibility to protect and preserve the environment rests with individual citizens and government at the local level. Environmental regulations must be based on unbiased, peer-reviewed, scientific evidence. Science is only as valid as those practicing and promoting it and the further removed it is from the local level it is, the higher the standard of scientific proof required.</p>
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<p>Climate Change and Environment (continued)</p>	<p>We support policies and regulations the allow individuals to power their homes and builidngs with off the grid on-site power generation.</p> <p>We support development of locally controlled municipal power systems.</p> <p>We support rewriting and amendments to Washington State energy siting processes that provide more citizen control.</p> <p>We advocate research based methods of fire suppression suited to the unique conditions of the Cascade Mountains, scrub lands, and dry rolling hills of Kittitas County.</p> <p>We support the preservation of places of archaeological or historical significance.</p> <p>The national power grid should be modernized and decentralized.</p> <p>Fracking and any future technologies developed that cause similar detriment to our fragile ecosystem and geological stability must be stopped.</p> <p>We think transporting and storing gas oil, coal and nuclear water are inherently hazardous practices. We support appropriate regulatory responses to protect the environment, human health and public safety including the development of re-processing technologies.</p> <p>Storage of nuclear waste at the Hanford site is of special concern.</p>	

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<p>Campaign and Elections</p>	<p>CAMPAIGN & ELECTIONS</p> <p>We support across-the-board public financing of elections.</p> <p>We support campaign finance reform at the local, state and national levels. Such reform should include timely reporting and full disclosure of campaign contributions and elimination of Super PACs and soft money.</p> <p>We support a constitutional amendment to overturn “Citizens United” and address unlimited corporate financial influence on our government, including elections. We believe that corporations are not “people” and that money is not “speech”.</p> <p>We support media access for all viable candidates in all national, state and local elections.</p> <p>We call on our government to underwrite the development of voting systems that record all precinct ballots equally. We support the right of convicted felons to vote except when they are incarcerated. Access of citizens to vote should be increased and we call on governments at all levels to avoid voter suppression.</p> <p>We uphold a constitutional amendment to establish voting as a right of all citizens.</p> <p>We support a constitutional amendment to abolish the Electoral College.</p> <p>We call for increased protection against foreign interference in our election process at all level of government.</p> <p>We support exploration of alternative models of county government that improve efficiency, transparency, and professionalism.</p>	<p>ELECTIONS</p> <p>Fair, secure and accurate elections are the foundations of a democratic representative republic. Preventing fraudulent voter registration of non-citizens and persons whose voting rights have been removed must be a priority.</p>

<p>Law & Justice</p>	<p>LAW & JUSTICE</p> <p>Reduction of crime can be best achieved through education, secure living conditions and gainful employment.</p> <p>We support police officers in the performance of their duties to serve and protect all citizens.</p> <p>We advocate for training which encourages de-escalation in violent situations and greater awareness of mental health issues.</p> <p>Law enforcement personnel who knowingly violate civil rights by activities such as racial profiling or harassment should be suspended, investigated, and prosecuted.</p> <p>We support sentencing reform eliminating mandatory sentencing and pretrial detention for misdemeanor, nonviolent, or cases where flight is not an issue.</p> <p>We call for the end of mass incarceration which primarily impacts poor and minority groups and closure of private prisons. Mitigating the negative consequences of a felony record such as job loss and rent housing refusal should be researched.</p> <p>We recognize the importance of hunting and other sporting uses of firearms to our economy and respect individual's rights to gun ownership. Gun owners should be fully responsible for the safekeeping and safe use of their weapons. Gun control and safety laws that currently exist should be energetically enforced. Responsible expansion of gun laws to achieve and enhance these goals include background checks, gun use safety and education.</p> <p>We support a ban on military-style semiautomatic rifles, weapons designed for military purposes, modifications to increase rate of fire, restoration of high-capacity ammunition magazines, and for the repeal of legislation (PLCAA 2005) barring gun manufacturer and dealers from legal liability.</p>	<p>CRIME AND PUNISHMENT</p> <p>The responsibility of government is to assist individuals protect life, liberty and property from criminal activity. Local governments are responsible for providing adequate police protection for this purpose. The prosecution of individuals who commit crimes must be vigorous while simultaneously protecting constitutional rights and guaranteeing equal justice under the law.</p> <p>Habitual offenders should be punished according to the severity of the offense.</p>
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<p>Law and Justice (cont)inued</p>	<p>We believe that women and men should be free from threat of sexual abuse and provide protected complaint paths for reporting any such occurrences to legal authorities. We expect local governments to efficiently and fairly oversee laws regarding marijuana production and sales.</p> <p>The use of illegal drugs is a public health issue rather than a criminal justice issue. We support increased efforts to address substance abuse and provide comprehensive rehabilitation which include research into the role of pharmaceutical companies and the failed “War on Drugs” initiative of the past thirty years.</p>	

<p>Economy</p>	<p>ECONOMIC JUSTICE</p> <p>We believe corporations should be regulated to serve the public interest. The economic history of the last century establishes the absolute necessity of a strong middle class in maintaining a healthy county, state and country.</p> <p>We support the elimination of the “Citizen’s United” U.S. Supreme Court decision by reversal or legislation. We strongly support a living wage for all workers. We encourage the expansion of tax credits, low interest loans and nonprofit micro lending for small businesses. We call for tax credits and incentives to be adjusted appropriately according to business size to reduce burdens and protect non-corporate businesses.</p> <p>We call for an adoption of a fair and progressive tax system. Corporations should be taxed on a fair assessment keyed to corporate income levels and use of infrastructure and effects on the environment.</p> <p>We support regulations limiting lobbying and contributions to government officials in order to create separation between corporations and government.</p> <p>We support protection and expansion of social security benefits.</p> <p>We support national and state single-payer health insurance including Medicare for all.</p> <p>We call for an increase in funding for the development of affordable and low-income housing in Kittitas county and Washington state, and increased funding and services to eliminate homelessness.</p> <p>We support fair trade agreements that acknowledge human rights and protect the environment.</p> <p>We support the establishment of a port district for Kittitas County.</p> <p>We support the elimination of exemption from insider trading laws for Members of Congress.</p> <p>We support equal access to</p>	<p>ECONOMY</p> <p>A free, open and competitive market is the natural and proper order for economic exchange. The extent to which the free market can function effectively is limited by the degree of government intervention. Therefore government should not subsidize or “bail out” failing organizations nor should it tax or hinder small businesses. Economic policies that encourage entrepreneurship and competition, and that protect local economies, without increased taxation will create jobs and must be implemented.</p> <p>TAXES</p> <p>The power to tax is a grant from the people and not an inherent power of government. The power of taxation is granted to the government for limited purposes. Tax revenue shall be used only to fund such legitimate government activities. Fines, fees and assessments shall not be sources of general revenue, but shall be set to cover only those costs directly associated with the services provided. Taxation that derives from the death of an individual is duplicative and must be repealed. Government should be good stewards of tax revenue and should limit spending to reduce unnecessary expenditures and waste. Legislators and government agencies shall not issue or authorize unfunded mandates.</p> <p>PROPERTY RIGHTS</p> <p>The right of the people to be secure in their ownership of private property is guaranteed by the Constitution and is fundamental to our form of government. Secure property rights preserve economic stability, free markets and most importantly principles of self determination. The determination of land uses, zoning and divisions of land varies from</p>
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<p>Economy (continued)</p>	<p>technology for all Americans and investment in the infrastructure to make this a reality and to make us more globally competitive.</p> <p>LABOR We call for fair and living wage jobs with portable and secured health, retirement and pension benefits, with hourly wages indexed to the cost of living. All workplaces must be safe and healthy environments. We expect equal pay for work of comparable worth, overtime pay, and due process in workplaces free of discrimination and harassment. We insist on equal pay for women. We encourage the protection of all workers' rights to organize, strike or use collective bargaining and arbitration when necessary. The National Labor Relations Board and state-run worker compensation programs are crucial parts of a fair economy. We call for the repeal, and for challenges to any resistance to repeal, — any and all anti-labor laws. We stand against any efforts to implement local or state-wide so-called right to work laws. We support a fair and just guest worker policy. We expect actions to be taken to implement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to retrain workers who are displaced or underemployed • Effective protection for whistleblowers, including for non-government workers • Meaningful penalties for employers engaged in unfair practices • Extending unemployment benefits to locked-out workers, and to the long-term unemployed in seriously depressed economies • Reductions in replacement of workers with low-wage, volunteer 	<p>community to community and the regulation thereof must remain local rather than with the state or federal government. Eminent Domain should be dictated solely in the case of imminent public necessity and subject to just and timely compensation.</p>

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	or prison labor, or replacing skilled workers with low-benefit	

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Economy (cotinued)	contractors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued and increased use of state-approved apprentices and local hiring programs • Elimination of employment barriers to ex-offenders, and increased efforts to provide rehabilitation and work for them • Continued state and federal protections for pension funds. 	

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<p>Foreign Policy</p>	<p>FOREIGN POLICY Underlying thinking that has established an exploitative foreign policy since WW-II should be reevaluated. We oppose use of private contractors to perform mercenary or troop support. American corporations using mercenaries in foreign countries should be prohibited. We support a focus on coalition building to reduce the use of unilateral actions by the United States in international conflicts. We call for the repeal of the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force, which has been used to justify military actions around the world. We support the primacy of diplomacy and oppose any use of pre-emptive first strikes. We support international diplomatic efforts that emphasize universal human rights, reduce the effects of climate change and concentrate on economic solutions that benefit both the United States as well as other nation states. We support limits and effective oversight on the use of the National Security Agency. We support the efforts of NATO and the United Nations. We seek nuclear disarmament. The president shall not have the sole responsibility for a nuclear strike. We seek to reduce all forms of extremism and to prevent terrorism. We support an even-handed and just solution between Israel and the Palestinians; recognize Israel's right to exist and the Palestinians right to govern the West Bank and Gaza freely.</p>	<p>FOREIGN TRADE A foundation of national economic growth is the opportunity for people to market their goods to other nations. Foreign trade policies must recognize this desire in other nations. Domestic policies must enable American trade to be competitive in a global free market economy. Unilaterally amending trade agreements can destroy substantial numbers of Washington jobs.</p> <p>IMMIGRATION America's greatness flows from our history of inviting greatness from all nations. This invitation continues to all who desire to join this nation through lawful means.</p> <p>Legislators must expand and enact programs for the temporary lawful entry of foreign workers with a system of verifiable immigration status. To ensure fairness and order, executive and judicial entities must be held responsible for enforcing the laws written by the legislature.</p> <p>NATIONAL SECURITY The primary role of government is to secure our borders and protect the lives of citizens from foreign aggression and terrorism. A strong well-equipped and combat-ready military is necessary for this purpose. An essential part of modern warfare is intelligence gathering to discover the activities of our enemies which threaten the security of our nation. Government must promote cooperation among security agencies, intelligence departments and law enforcement, but shall not infringe on the constitutional rights of citizens.</p>

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Health Care	<p>HEALTH CARE</p> <p>We support movement toward an affordable single-payer system that includes all aspects of physical and mental health care for all citizens. Our goal is affordable accessible health care for all Washingtonians.</p> <p>We support expansion of Medicare and Medicaid.</p> <p>We support removal of the income cap on Social Security Tax.</p> <p>We strive to ensure that women and families can receive family planning consultation from professional health care providers.</p>	<p>HEALTH CARE</p> <p>A free and limited government is wholly inadequate and incompetent to manage health care decisions. Government intervention must be limited to supporting free and open market solutions to reduce the cost of health care.</p>

<p>Personal Rights</p>	<p>HUMAN RIGHTS We oppose discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, political participation and education based on race, religion, age, gender, or gender identification, sexual orientation disability, national origin, or marital status. We respect rights and conditions established in treaties between the United States and of Native American Tribes of Washington and all other States and territories. We support comprehensive immigration reform that provides a pathway to citizenship for undocumented workers and a plan for guest workers. We support the Dream Act. We recognize privacy as a right and support phasing out of the Patriot Act and any other legislation or executive orders that permit infringement on citizens rights to free, unmonitored communication. We believe that women have the right to determine whether and when they will bear children and that all decisions regarding a woman's reproductive medical care are private matters between the individual woman and her health care providers. We must improve the service to our veterans by providing full compensation, educational benefits, rehabilitation and treatment for their injuries, both physical and psychological, as well as support for their families. We support legislation that provides asylum to citizens from other countries who, for political or cultural reasons, live in fear for their lives and well being. We respect the rights of senior citizens and individuals with disabilities to direct their own lives. The State has the responsibility to help provide adequate housing, extended education, employment supervision,</p>	<p>PERSONAL SECURITY The constitutional right of individual citizens to keep and bear arms must be held inviolate by the Supreme Court and all other branches of government. Fear generated by isolated incidents of insanity, malice or despair must not be allowed to strip any law abiding citizen from owning or possessing any firearm. History shows that the first order of the tyrant is the disarmament of the people.</p> <p>RIGHT TO LIFE The right to life is the preeminent right. Liberty ends where it conflicts with another's life; therefore government must protect all innocent human life.</p>
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	<p>nutrition and medical care to those who cannot provide such services for themselves.</p> <p>We believe in the separation of church and state and we oppose prayer in public meetings and in publicly funded and charter-like schools.</p> <p>We are in favor of religious liberty as stated in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.</p> <p>We support the adoption of legislation that allows asylum for citizens from other countries who for political or cultural reasons live in fear for their lives and well-being.</p>	

<p>Education</p>	<p>EDUCATION</p> <p>we support full government funding for comprehensive public schooling, from early childhood through a bachelor’s degree or certification, at no cost to students.</p> <p>Schools shall provide a safe and healthy environment for all students, including members of sexual minorities.</p> <p>Schools shall provide access to a variety of programs to meet the wants and needs of their students including basic, gifted, English Language Learning, special education, vocational and technical education.</p> <p>We support adequate consistent funding to provide for the full implementation and funding of the State Board of Health 52009 rule revision “Health and Safety Standards for Primary and Secondary Schools” (WAC 246-366).</p> <p>We expect school districts to raise awareness about the struggles of minority groups and other historically marginalized groups in the past and in the present.</p> <p>We support full inclusion of people with disabilities in all school activities and seek to implement programs to further encourage interaction among all students.</p> <p>We call for an increase in academic freedom for school districts to implement programs and assessments using best practices to reduce dropout rates, increase graduation rates and raise student achievement.</p> <p>We oppose public funding of charter schools.</p> <p>We support educational research and pilot programs that utilize well resourced information to improve teaching and learning.</p> <p>We oppose the arming of faculty, staff or any other non-constabulary person to implement any so-called “safety program” as a counter effort to school shootings or any other on campus threat.</p>	<p>EDUCATION</p> <p>An excellent education for all children is the responsibility of each parent. Government’s role should be limited to assisting parents in meeting that responsibility.</p> <p>Education standards should allow each child to achieve their unique potential. Local schools, be they public, private, religious or in-home, in conjunction with parents should set those standards.</p> <p>Educators should teach children how to think, not what to think or when to think. Elementary and secondary education must focus on the foundations of reading, writing, mathematics and the sciences. A thorough knowledge of these subjects is vital for successful study of more advanced disciplines. Children must also learn how to interact with each other in a respectful and mature manner.</p>
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Upper County	<p>UPPER COUNTY We support increased funding for Upper County parks and recreation including projects that facilitate access to lands for public recreational use. We strongly oppose the idea of splitting Upper County from Kittitas County and forming a separate County. As population growth continues, more and more encounters are happening between humans and predators and other wild animals. In-depth education is needed for people to understand how to coexist peacefully. We advocate for integrated planning among the U.S. Forest Service, the Washington Departments of Natural Resources and Fish and Wildlife, and Teanaway Basin landowners for long-term forest health and restoration,</p>	
Infrastructure		<p>ENERGY Energy independence is critical to national security and prosperity and must be an urgent national priority. Government must protect and encourage a robust and multifaceted national energy industry.</p> <p>TRANSPORTATION Government is responsible to provide a suitable and safe transportation infrastructure. Funds collected to meet this responsibility must be used in a timely and efficient manner to meet the purpose for which they were collected.</p>