



## **PLATFORM OF THE YOUNG DEMOCRATS OF MISSISSIPPI**

### **EDUCATION**

We believe education is the key to expanding opportunity for children across our state. We support public education and our teachers. We support fully, adequately and equitably funding education. We support making early childhood education more available. We believe in ensuring that college is affordable and accessible. We support programs that include grants and scholarships for college students because we find it imperative that we reduce the burden of higher education debt and provide more access.

### **HEALTH CARE**

We believe accessible, affordable, high-quality health care is part of the American promise, and a right that should be protected. Mississippians should have the security that comes with good health care, and that no one should face extreme financial hardship because he or she gets sick. We support the implementation and continuation of the Affordable Care Act. We advocate for the expansion of Medicaid. We support increased research into mental health issues such as depression. Further, we support efforts to combat such issues such as increased student counseling in schools and universities. We support funding for the treatment, prevention, and full continuum of community-based supports that help Mississippians seeking recovery from substance use and mental health challenges.

### **VOTING RIGHTS AND ELECTIONS**

We believe voting is the most fundamental and essential right of American citizens. We believe we should be finding ways to encourage voter participation not stifling it. We believe elections should be free and fair. We support the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act and oppose any repeal or expiration of these essential laws and protections. We support easier access to voting such as: online voting registration, same-day voter registration, and early voting. We oppose Voter ID laws.

## **EQUALITY**

We support equality for all regardless of race, color, class, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, population, national origin, immigrant status, disability, or appearance. The family is the cornerstone of our society, the building block of our civilization. Whatever the form of the family, the Young Democrats of Mississippi realize the value of human relationships and supports all committed loving couples. We believe that all Mississippians deserve to be treated equally and fairly and free from harassment. That is why we oppose discriminatory laws that divide our communities in any way. The Young Democrats of Mississippi support affordable housing options across the state, including accessible options for the aging population.

We strongly support changing the Mississippi state flag and removing the confederate symbol as it represents the dark past and we want to promote the bright future.

## **WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

We support and promote policies that strengthen women's economic security, including, but not limited to, support for family caregiving, access to affordable health care and child care, equal wages, stronger protections for domestic violence and sexual assault, affordable housing, and higher education. We support a woman's right to privacy in making her own health care decisions.

## **ECONOMY**

We support providing more opportunities and jobs for Mississippians. Therefore, we support providing more programs to help small businesses and entrepreneurs. We believe in investing in our own people as a means of economic development. We support a fair and reasonable tax structure and incentives that help all businesses, not for political contributors and companies who did not have a vested interest in our communities.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

We support investing in our roads, bridges, water, wastewater, and sewer facilities all across the state of Mississippi. We support providing assistance to municipalities and counties to repair and maintain the public infrastructure. We believe safe and reliable public infrastructure is an essential function of government and vital to economic development, and a better quality of life.

## **VETERANS**

We thank our veterans for their service to our country and state and we believe that gratitude should be reflected in policy and legislation. All veterans have earned the respect and right of support from the community. Veterans should be provided the best no-cost medical services for

life, housing assistance, education for retraining, and preference for hiring. These benefits go towards fulfilling our promises to our veterans.

### **LAW AND JUSTICE**

We support criminal justice reforms that include but are not limited to, sentencing reforms, reclassifying of certain non-violent crimes, probation and community based rehabilitation as opposed to imprisonment. We support alternate forms of punishment, rather than incarceration, for juvenile offenders. We oppose the privatization of the prison system. We support increased training for our police officers. We support increased accountability and transparency within our criminal justice system through the incorporation of body cameras into everyday policing and appointing a special prosecutor in cases involving police brutality. We condemn the practice of profiling in law enforcement.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

As responsible stewards of the earth, we must work to build a society that has the capacity to endure. This includes reducing the impact of man's activity upon the earth's ecosystem, responsible management of resource use, and sustainable agriculture practices. Together, our task is to build a civilization that can stand the test of time. Clean water is a human right, and climate change is real. We support the development and promotion of sustainable energy and alternative energy sources including, but not limited to, wind and solar energy, and we urge our elected officials in the Mississippi Legislature and U. S. Congress to enact legislation that will establish sustainable energy standards and sustainable energy portfolios.

### **IMMIGRATION**

We are a nation of immigrants, and we will extend the promise of citizenship to those still struggling for freedom. Undocumented immigrants within our borders, who clear a background check, work hard, and pay taxes should have a path to earn full participation in America. Family reunification should continue to be the cornerstone of our legal immigration system, and we should offer more English-language and civic education classes so immigrants can better assume the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. We oppose any legislation designed to limit legal immigration. We oppose and condemn rhetoric that seeks to divide us based on our differences instead of connect us based on our commonalities.

### **TORT REFORM**

We believe it is not the place of government to decide what proper compensation is, or what it should be limited to, in cases where individuals have been wronged or injured. We believe the legislature should return the right to decide liabilities and damages to the jury.

### **LABOR**

We believe that all working Mississippians have the right to unionize in order to protect their rights as workers, and to engage in fair collective bargaining. Unions are key to the development

of fair wages and safe work environments. We strongly support any laws or practices that discourage and prevent any discrimination in hiring and termination of employees.

### **OPEN GOVERNMENT**

We believe an open, accessible, and transparent government is the best government. We support common-sense campaign finance reform that includes meaningful reporting requirements and closing loopholes legalizing bribery.