

Summary of the Green New Deal

The Green New Deal is a four part program for moving America quickly out of crisis into a secure, sustainable future. Inspired by the New Deal programs that helped us out of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Green New Deal will provide similar relief and create an economy that makes our communities sustainable, healthy and just.

THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE GREEN NEW DEAL:

I - THE ECONOMIC BILL OF RIGHTS

Our country cannot truly move forward until the roots of inequality are pulled up, and the seeds of a new, healthier economy are planted. Thus, the Green New Deal begins with an Economic Bill of Rights that ensures all citizens:

1. The right to employment through a Full Employment Program that will create 25 million jobs by implementing a nationally funded, but locally controlled direct employment initiative replacing unemployment offices with local employment offices offering public sector jobs which are "stored" in job banks in order to take up any slack in private sector employment.

- Local communities will use a process of broad stakeholder input and democratic decision making to fairly implement these programs.
- Pay-to-play prohibitions will ensure that campaign contributions or lobbying favors do not impact decision-making.
- We will end unemployment in America once and for all by guaranteeing a job at a living wage for every American willing and able to work.

2. Worker's rights including the right to a living wage, to a safe workplace, to fair trade, and to organize a union at work without fear of firing or reprisal.

3. The right to quality health care which will be achieved through a single-payer Medicare-for-All program.

4. The right to a tuition-free, quality, federally funded, local controlled public education system from pre-school through college. We will also forgive student loan debt from the current era of unaffordable college education.

5. The right to decent affordable housing, including an immediate halt to all foreclosures and evictions. We will:

- create a federal bank with local branches to take over homes with distressed mortgages and either restructure the mortgages to affordable levels, or if the occupants cannot afford a mortgage, rent homes to the occupants;
- expand rental and home ownership assistance;
- create ample public housing; and,
- offer capital grants to non-profit developers of affordable housing until all people can obtain decent housing at no more than 25% of their income.

6. The right to accessible and affordable utilities – heat, electricity, phone, internet, and public transportation – through democratically run, publicly owned utilities that operate at cost, not for profit.

7. The right to fair taxation that's distributed in proportion to ability to pay. In addition, corporate tax subsidies will be made transparent by detailing them in public budgets where they can be scrutinized, not hidden as tax breaks.

II - A GREEN TRANSITION

The second priority of the Green New Deal is a Green Transition Program that will convert the old, gray economy into a new, sustainable economy that is environmentally sound, economically viable and socially responsible. We will:

1. Invest in green business by providing grants and low-interest loans to grow green businesses and cooperatives, with an emphasis on small, locally-based companies that keep the wealth created by local labor circulating in the community rather than being drained off to enrich absentee investors.
2. Prioritize green research by redirecting research funds from fossil fuels and other dead-end industries toward research in wind, solar and geothermal. We will invest in research in sustainable, nontoxic materials, closed-loop cycles that eliminate waste and pollution, as well as organic agriculture, permaculture, and sustainable forestry.
3. Provide green jobs by enacting the Full Employment Program which will directly provide 16 million jobs in sustainable energy and energy efficiency retrofitting, mass transit and "complete streets" that promote safe bike and pedestrian traffic, regional food systems based on sustainable organic agriculture, and clean manufacturing.

III - REAL FINANCIAL REFORM

The takeover of our economy by big banks and well-connected financiers has destabilized both our democracy and our economy. It's time to take Wall Street out of the driver's seat and to free the truly productive segments of working America to make this economy work for all of us. Real Financial Reform will:

1. Relieve the debt overhang holding back the economy by reducing homeowner and student debt burdens.
2. Democratize monetary policy to bring about public control of the money supply and credit creation. This means we'll nationalize the private bank-dominated Federal Reserve Banks and place them under a Monetary Authority within the Treasury Department.
3. Break up the oversized banks that are "too big to fail."
4. End taxpayer-funded bailouts for banks, insurers, and other financial companies. We'll use the FDIC resolution process for failed banks to reopen them as public banks where possible after failed loans and underlying assets are auctioned off.
5. Regulate all financial derivatives and require them to be traded on open exchanges.
6. Restore the Glass-Steagall separation of depository commercial banks from speculative investment banks.

7. Establish a 90% tax on bonuses for bailed out bankers.

8. Support the formation of federal, state, and municipal public-owned banks that function as non-profit utilities. Under the Green New Deal we will start building a financial system that is open, honest, stable, and serves the real economy rather than the phony economy of high finance.

IV - A FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACY

We won't get these vital reforms without a fourth and final set of reforms to give us a real, functioning democracy. Just as we are replacing the old economy with a new one, we need a new politics to restore the promise of American democracy. The New Green Deal will:

1. Revoke corporate personhood by amending our Constitution to make clear that corporations are not persons and money is not speech. Those rights belong to living, breathing human beings - not to business entities controlled by the wealthy.

2. Protect our right to vote by supporting Rep. Jesse Jackson, Jr.'s proposed "Right to Vote Amendment," to clarify to the Supreme Court that yes, we do have a constitutional right to vote.

3. Enact the Voter Bill of Rights that will:

- guarantee us a voter-marked paper ballot for all voting;
- require that all votes are counted before election results are released;
- replace partisan oversight of elections with non-partisan election commissions;
- celebrate our democratic aspirations by making Election Day a national holiday;
- bring simplified, safe same-day voter registration to the nation so that no qualified voter is barred from the polls;
- do away with so-called "winner take all" elections in which the "winner" does not have the support of most of the voters, and replace that system with instant runoff voting and proportional representation, systems most advanced countries now use to good effect;
- replace big money control of election campaigns with full public financing and free and equal access to the airwaves;
- guarantee equal access to the ballot and to the debates to all qualified candidates;
- abolish the Electoral College and implement direct election of the President;
- restore the vote to ex-offenders who've paid their debt to society; and,
- enact Statehood for the District of Columbia so that those Americans have representation in Congress and full rights to self rule like the rest of us.

4. Protect local democracy and democratic rights by commissioning a thorough review of federal preemption law and its impact on the practice of local democracy in the United States. This review will put at its center the "democracy question" – that is, what level of government is most open to democratic participation and most suited to protecting democratic rights.

5. Create a Corporation for Economic Democracy, a new federal corporation (like the Corporation for Public Broadcasting) to provide publicity, training, education, and direct financing for cooperative development and for democratic reforms to make government agencies, private associations, and business enterprises more participatory.

6. Strengthen media democracy by expanding federal support for locally-owned broadcast media and local print media.

7. Protect our personal liberty and freedoms by:

- repealing the Patriot Act and those parts of the National Defense Authorization Act that violate our civil liberties;
- prohibiting the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI from conspiring with local police forces to suppress our freedoms of assembly and of speech; and,
- ending the war on immigrants – including the cruel, so-called "secure communities" program.

8. Rein in the military-industrial complex by

- reducing military spending by 50% and closing U.S. military bases around the world;
- restoring the National Guard as the centerpiece of our system of national defense; and,
- creating a new round of nuclear disarmament initiatives.