

**Report of the Platform & Resolutions Committee
2012-13 Platforms: Values for Freedom and the Common Good**

Tooele County Democrats reaffirm the simple and timeless values that make Utah and Tooele County great: protecting freedom, promoting responsibility, planning for the future, and supporting common sense solutions to community problems. Democrats cherish the individual freedoms set forth in the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence, and have an abiding faith in the judgment of hardworking Utah families. Tooele County Democrats believe government is constituted by the people to serve the noble purpose of creating an orderly, safe society that promotes the common good.

1. Economic Development

1.1 Wealth Creation

Tooele County Democrats believe economic development generated in the private and public sectors creates the wealth that sustains a high living standard in Utah. It is our commitment to strengthen industries which provide a diverse economic base with abundant, higher-paying, quality jobs.

Tooele County Democrats know that economic growth is driven by long-run investment in four basic categories of economic assets:

- Labor
- Public infrastructure and plant and equipment
- Agriculture
- Technology

Tooele County must be committed to a healthy and educated population, good infrastructure in transportation and technology.

Tooele County Democrats applaud the entrepreneurial spirit of small business owners and support creation of incentives to ensure their success. Democrats are concerned about the practice of giving subsidies to attract out-of-state companies when it damages the economic vitality of existing Utah businesses.

Government can play an important role in fostering healthy competition, supporting innovation, promoting job creation, and ensuring worker safety.

1.2 Rewarding Work

Tooele County Democrats believe that all Utahns should labor to the best of their abilities to provide for themselves and their families. In return, employers should pay a decent, life-sustaining wage and appropriate benefits or taxpayers unfairly end up subsidizing those employers who fail to meet these standards. We believe gender should play no role in determining salary levels. Utah Democrats support the rights of workers to organize and collectively bargain.

Tooele County Democrats support programs for low-income working families that break the cycle of poverty, reward industry, promote self-sufficiency, support parenting, and encourage families to stay together. We also believe that government must continue to provide assistance to the low-income disabled and elderly members of our society who cannot provide for themselves.

1.3 The False Choice of Jobs vs. Environmental Quality

We believe Tooele County does not have to make choices between a healthy economy and a healthy environment, Tooele County can have both by promoting new technologies that reduce carbon emissions and ensure clean air and water.

2. Good Government

2.1 Tooele County Taxes: Better Priorities to Help Working Families

Tooele County Democrats have a firm and enduring belief in low taxes and balanced budgets. Tooele County Democrats demand efficiency in county and municipal governments and support strict priorities for spending that place public safety, health, and education above all else.

Tooele County Democrats believe that the systematic and conscious shifting of the tax burden to middle-class and poor working families is especially unfair and damaging to local economy. We support increasing the flexibility and local control for city and county taxation. We support shifting the tax burden from sales tax on food to other sources of revenue because of its unfair burden on the poorest Utahns.

2.2 Open and Accountable Government

The foundation of our representative democracy resides in the people. Tooele County Democrats affirm our support of an open, accountable government where the people of Utah have a full opportunity to participate in shaping public policy. The people must have recourse through constitutionally established means of the courts, initiatives and referendums, and freedom of expression. In return, public officials must serve with integrity, dignity, responsiveness, and fiscal responsibility. Tooele County Democrats support public officials receiving an appropriate salary and benefits, but public service should not be used for personal financial enrichment.

2.3 Election and Ethics Reform

Tooele County Democrats believe in a level playing field in the election process. Tooele County Democrats believe in the principles of full, timely disclosure of campaign contributions, and limits on the amount of contributions from single sources. Tooele County Democrats believe public officials should not be able to convert campaign funds to personal use. Tooele County Democrats recognize that it is vital to restore and maintain trust in state, county and federal governments and to ensure all elected officials are held accountable to the highest ethical standards.

2.4 Justice

Utahns have a right to the speedy resolution of civil and criminal court cases. Tooele County Democrats believe in fairness. Fairness requires that all citizens enjoy the full benefits of citizenship regardless of their race, gender, religion, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or economic status.

3. Public Safety and Health

3.1 Law Enforcement

Tooele County Democrats believe that every person has a right to be safe in their homes, neighborhoods, and communities. Tooele County Democrats appreciate the delicate balance required of law enforcement, be tough on crime, while recognizing that the vast majority of Utahns respect and honor our laws.

It is also vital that we acknowledge and strive to improve our first-responder communication infrastructure and increase cooperation between federal, state and local law enforcement, fire, and EMS agencies. We recognize the value and strive to support these paid/volunteer agencies.

3.2 Corrections

Meaningful punishment that includes incarceration is a necessary component of public safety. Tooele County Democrats recognize the need to fund effective intervention and treatment programs because most offenders who are incarcerated will one day return to our communities.

3.3 Firearms

Tooele County Democrats support the constitutional right of citizens to possess firearms for lawfully defending their families and property and for sporting purposes. We support common-sense measures to reduce gun violence and enhance public safety, enforcement of gun laws, and education on the safe use and storage of firearms.

3.4 Healthcare

This year's passage of comprehensive, market based health insurance reforms is long overdue. This reform in insurance is only a beginning to seeking solutions to our ongoing healthcare crisis.

4. Our Environmental Legacy

4.1 Rural Heritage

Tooele County has vast rural areas, numerous rural communities, and a rich pioneer heritage. We are concerned about the dwindling lands critical to wildlife, agriculture, watersheds, open space; and adequate rural economic development to support the people of rural Utah. Tooele County Democrats support efforts, both public and private, to meet the needs of the residents of rural areas, while preserving our rural heritage for future generations.

4.2 Natural Resources

Tooele County Democrats recognizes that both rural and urban Utah economies rely upon a healthy environment. Irresponsible over-allocation of our water resources in the West Desert threaten the environmental habitat, agricultural production, and tourism in rural Utah that are important segments of a vibrant Utah economy and the air quality and health of the residents of urban Tooele County. A taking of Utah's rural assets and transferring them out of state is unacceptable.

Tooele County Democrats seek to ensure the protection of public health and create a legacy of clean, safe air, soil, water; a sustainable and balanced plant and animal wildlife population with adequate winter and summer range.

Polluting businesses should be held responsible for cleanup and restoration.

Tooele County Democrats believe that the State should lead efforts to increase energy and water conservation.

4.3 Air Quality

We believe that all sectors of Tooele County's economy, including the government, need to share the task of reducing pollutants. Degraded air quality negatively impacts health and the economy upon which our citizens rely.

4.4 Transportation and Infrastructure

Tooele County Democrats understand the enormous effect of growth on our environment, transportation systems, and other community facilities. We believe in addressing state infrastructure needs and community facilities through careful planning and development, in order to avoid crisis responses that result inevitably in unsatisfactory results.

Community facilities should be maintained as a high priority to avoid unnecessary, costly replacement.

5. Community

5.1 Family

Tooele County Democrats believe that strong families strengthen society and are the foundation of our communities. The primary responsibility of raising children belongs to parents and legal guardians, not government. We challenge every parent to be involved in their children's education, to read to them, to know their friends and their teachers, and, above all, to teach their children right from wrong and set a good example.

Tooele County Democrats will support programs that lend families a helping hand in times of need.

5.2 Education

Tooele County Democrats support the State Democratic platform. We believe all children have the right to a quality public education and that providing that education is one of the primary responsibilities of state government. It is not a commodity to be bought and sold.

Tooele County Democrats further recognize that education does not end at the 12th grade and that many of today's workers will have to be retrained for tomorrow's jobs.

5.3 Faith

Tooele County Democrats support the right of all Americans to express faith. We affirm the protection the Constitution gives to religious expression and recognize the unique historic role faith has played in our community development and heritage. We recognize the importance that faith continues to play in the lives of Tooele County Democrats and all Utahns.

Tooele County Democrats believe that the constitutional principle of separating church and state maintains the rights of all Americans to worship how, where, and what they may.

5.4 The Arts and Humanities

Tooele County Democrats support the promotion of the arts and humanities in our county. Creative industries are essential to a high quality of life in Utah, attract tourists, and strengthen our economy.

5.5 Seniors

Tooele County Democrats recognize that senior citizens, the fastest-growing portion of Utah's population, deserve assistance in preserving their quality of life and achieving the highest possible level of health and well-being. Utah Democrats will ensure that seniors have access to information and services to enhance their physical and mental health and increase their access to affordable long-term care.

Tooele County Democrats will work to maximize independence for senior citizens and their families. Support for programs that build safe neighborhoods, create affordable housing and healthcare. Enhance financial security by preserving, protecting and improving reduction of barriers to employment. Increase access to public transportation; and encourage participation in public events, educational forums, and include options for making additional contributions to society through voluntary services.

5.6 Military Veterans

Tooele County Democrats recognize the community of veterans, who have served our military, guaranteeing the maintenance of the quality of life we presently afford. Tooele County Democrats recognize the responsibility we shoulder in assisting these veterans to preserve the quality of life and family, health and well-being, jobs and financial security, education and retraining.

Tooele County Democrats will ensure veterans have access to information and services to enhance their physical and mental health and increase their access to affordable long-term care.

Tooele County Democrats will work to maximize independence for disabled veterans and their families. Support for programs that build safe neighborhoods, create affordable housing and healthcare. Enhance financial security by preserving, protecting and improving social services, reduce barriers to employment. Increase access to public transportation; and encourage participation in public events, educational forums, and include options for making additional contributions to society.

6. Conclusion

The ideas expressed in this platform are collective and do not likely reflect the positions of any single individual. The Tooele County Democratic Party is a party of inclusion and diversity, encouraging the participation of people with differing opinions and backgrounds. We embrace diversity as a source of strength in our community rather than a reason for division. As such, we respect the individual conscience of each Tooele County resident on the issues presented in this platform and welcome the participation of all county residents within the Democratic Party.