



## **PLATFORM**

*As proposed by the YDG Convention, April 11, 2021*

*Ratified at the YDG Convention, April 11, 2021*

*Chair: Harry Underwood*

*Members: Luke Netto, Mark Putman, Ramin Zareian, Sadie McIntyre, Rick Hart, Zane Malas, Victor Jones, Disha Kumar*

## **YOUNG DEMOCRATS OF GEORGIA LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

***The Young Democrats of Georgia wishes to acknowledge that we gather together to state our values on lands that have been stewarded through many centuries by the ancestors and descendants of Tribal Nations who have been here since time immemorial. We honor the communities native to this continent, and recognize that our country was built on Indigenous homelands. We pay our respects to the millions of Indigenous people throughout history who have protected our lands, waters, and animals.***

***The Young Democrats of Georgia recognize we present this platform on the lands of the Apalachee, Choctaw, Cherokee, Hitchiti, Oconee, Miccosukee, Muskogee Creek, Timucua, Yamasee, Guale, Seminole, Shawnee and Yuchi peoples.***

## **PREAMBLE**

I. Law and Justice:

We believe in the fair application of the U.S. Constitution. We believe that the understanding of the constitution should be reexamined at every application. Even those in power are beholden to the laws of this nation and this state. We support civil rights at all levels for all persons.

II. Social Issues:

We oppose attempts to infringe upon the civil rights of any group. We support allowing any person of legal age to marry. We support fully inclusive non-discrimination protections for all Georgians.

III. Environment:

We are aware of the scientific fact of anthropogenic climate change and of the tremendous inconvenience it will cause to future generations. We support the development of clean sources of energy and the implementation of plans for creating a more sustainable future. We recognize the challenges associated with clean energy, and we support nuclear power until renewable sources present a viable alternative.

IV. Education:

We support public education. We remember the HOPE scholarship's purpose of increasing access to a college education, and we support any measure that moves to promote a balance between need-based and merit-based HOPE Scholarship recipients. We support the teaching of science regardless of its implications in other realms. We support a dramatic increase in teacher pay.

V. Urban Development:

We believe all communities need to be developed sustainably. We support the use and expansion of public transportation to aid in this effort, and we encourage state and local governments to consider alternatives to road building in addressing our transportation needs.

VI. Health issues:

We support universal access to health care and government efforts to expand coverage to as many people as possible. We oppose all efforts to limit access to safe abortions. We believe that electronic health records are crucial to effective healthcare, and we support evidence-based medicine.

VII. Elections:

We believe that a paper record of each person's vote is essential to democracy; we oppose voter identification laws. We support the abolition of the Electoral College. We oppose allowing elected representatives to change party without an election beforehand.

VIII. International Policy:

We believe in multilateral diplomacy. Conflicts must be resolved peacefully, with the rights of the oppressed held in the highest regard. We support the self-determination of all peoples, in keeping with the United Nations Charter.

IX. Economic Policy:

We believe every person should have the economic opportunity to live a dignified life. We support the rights of individuals to unionize. We support robust government regulation of the economy.

## **SECTION I: LAW AND JUSTICE**

1. Because we recognize that the criminal justice system is flawed in determining the guilt or innocence of an individual and because we recognize that the imposition of the death penalty is grossly disproportionate, particularly in regard to racial minorities and indigent persons, we support efforts to impose a moratorium on the death penalty and ultimately to repeal capital punishment in Georgia and the United States.
2. The government should respect those matters that its citizens hold most private; to fail to do so does irreparable harm to the liberties and freedoms of every citizen. Therefore, the government should not discriminate against people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
3. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports restoring citizenship and voting privileges to the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated.
4. The Young Democrats of Georgia, in support of the 6th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, supports publicly financed counsel for indigent defendants, with all deliberate speed, during all phases of their appeals process, especially in capital cases.
5. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports allowing the residents of a proposed municipality to have a vote on whether or not they should incorporate as a city unless the proposed municipality is already located within a city limit.
6. We the Young Democrats of Georgia reject the theory of the unitary executive. We do not believe that the President of the United States has unlimited authority in regard to issues pertaining to national security and intelligence. Further, we believe that to leave an overly aggressive Presidency unchallenged sets a dangerous precedent for our country. We support the full investigation of crimes against the Constitution. If there is sufficient evidence to justify impeachment, proceedings should commence.
7. We oppose the practice of racial profiling and police brutality by law enforcement and support measures to eliminate this practice in Georgia.

8. We oppose the inclusion of all arrested persons in a DNA registry.
9. We support adjusting the sentences for victimless nonviolent crimes from incarceration to community service and fines as an alternative in order to abate the financial strain on state budgets and to make funds available to the board of regents. The Young Democrats of Georgia oppose mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent crimes.
10. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports common sense gun control, which includes universal background checks, the ban of bump stocks and 3D printed firearms, waiting periods, mental health checks, and limits on assault-style weapons and ammunition capacities.
11. The Young Democrats of Georgia oppose religious tests for public office, as a violation of the essential separation of religion and government as detailed in the U.S. Constitution.
12. The Young Democrats of Georgia oppose any privatization of the prison system.
13. The Young Democrats of Georgia oppose any measure to allow civilian firearms on school or college campuses, in bars, in places of worship, or in places of public transportation. We support greater investment in the hiring of school counselors as opposed to investment in hiring more resource officers for the purpose of conflict resolution.
14. 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.
15. We support hate crime legislation designed to enhance criminal penalties for acts of harassment, violence or intimidation committed because of the victim's race, color, ancestry, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, hairstyle or texture, lack of religion, or disability.
16. The Young Democrats of Georgia support the legalization and regulated sales of cannabis/marijuana, for both recreational and medicinal purposes. In addition, we support the expungement of all criminal records for those charged for possession of cannabis.
17. The Young Democrats of Georgia support a total ban on slavery and involuntary servitude, without exception.
18. We oppose cash bail.
19. The Young Democrats of Georgia recognize the legacy and harms of slavery are perpetuated to this day, and in order to try and lessen the current harm of slavery, we support reparations to descendants of victims of slavery and the slave trade who were

enslaved in the United States and its preceding European colonies from 1619 to 1865, as informed by Dr. William "Sandy" Darity's 3-point reparations plan, and funded through the base appropriations through the Budget Control Act and supplemental appropriations bills that allow Congress to bypass political delays in passing and funding Black Reparations. We also call for the establishment of the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act.

20. The Young Democrats of Georgia recognize the First Nations peoples whose ancestors were expelled through the Trail of Tears and related expulsions from Georgia as the traditional custodians of the land on which the State of Georgia resides, and we support the recognition of all prior treaties with the Cherokee, Muscogee and other historic nations within Georgia, as well as restitution by the State of Georgia and the United States to the victimized nations for past dispossessions of their Aboriginal ancestors in Georgia. In addition, we support the restoration of tribal sovereignty over land within the State of Georgia to the modern Aboriginal nations whose ancestors were dispossessed of their land. We recognize that Aboriginal nations have the right to determine membership and citizenship, and that it should not be confined by blood ancestry. We recognize that Aboriginal nations ought to receive the full funding and material support they deserve from the U.S. and Georgia state governments, and support all means to ensure the full participation of Native peoples in civil society and the economy in the state and nationwide while recognizing and supporting tribal sovereignty.
21. The Young Democrats of Georgia encourage the incorporation of the planks of this platform into the platform and legislative action items of the Democratic Party of Georgia.
22. We strongly condemn any attempt to limit or constrain the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of the decennial U.S. Census to all residents of the United States. Furthermore, we support including non-citizen residents into the U.S. Census count, as well as the counting of incarcerated persons as residents of their last location of free residence rather than as residents of their present location of incarceration for purposes of redistricting at all levels of government.
23. The Young Democrats of Georgia recognize that the citizen's arrest is an archaic law that promotes vigilantism and discrimination and supports efforts to repeal it; we denounce any attempts to strengthen the citizen's arrest or revitalize it.
24. We support the repeal of qualified immunity.
25. We support local autonomy in people choosing to change funding of their police and other public services.

## **SECTION II: SOCIAL ISSUES**

1. We oppose legislation that discriminates against Americans on the basis of who they are and whom they love. The Young Democrats of Georgia strongly support the Supreme Court's Obergefell v. Hodges decision and considers marriage between two consenting adults to be a fundamental right, and that all couples should be afforded the same rights as heterosexual civil marriages - including the right to adopt. We support the repeal or revision of Section IV of the Georgia Constitution to reflect the right to civil marriage, divorce and separate maintenance between two consenting, nonconsanguineous adults without regard to their sex or gender identity.
2. We support providing driver's licenses to all residents of Georgia who are of proper age and ability, to guarantee that those persons driving on Georgia's roads are qualified and responsible for their actions.
3. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the right of any consenting adult to enter and leave the institution of marriage without undue government barriers, as a matter of civil rights.
4. We believe that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex or genders, and as such, we support the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in the state of Georgia to the U.S. Constitution as well as an Equal Rights Amendment in the Georgia State Constitution.
5. Because we support the humane treatment of animals, we promote the spaying and neutering of pets.
6. We oppose discrimination against Georgians based on geographic location.
7. We believe that the age of legal contractual responsibility, 18, should be the determinant of legal ability to make responsible decisions regarding the purchase and consumption of alcohol. Therefore we support eliminating federal agency rules that set the drinking age to 21.
8. Acknowledging that the young men and women who have fought bravely for our country deserve to be treated with respect, The Young Democrats of Georgia supports giving our military veterans greater access to benefits, education, and job opportunities and efforts to end veteran homelessness.
9. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports fully inclusive non-discrimination laws that cover employment, public accommodation, and public spaces.
10. The Young Democrats of Georgia support programs that assist single parent households and foster parental involvement in children's lives.
11. To promote strong families and the general welfare of Georgia's citizens the Young Democrats of Georgia supports paid parental leave of at least 12 weeks and free and

universally accessible childcare for all Georgians.

12. The Young Democrats of Georgia support all workers, including those who engage in sex work, and support decriminalizing sex work, stopping discrimination based on their source of income that result in denial of housing, health care, insurance, or public benefits.
13. The Young Democrats of Georgia support all workers, and we recognize there are several job sectors that are currently excluded from federal protections and rights, such as domestic and farm workers who are not protected under the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Equal Employment and Opportunity Commission, and the National Labor Relations Act. We support closing every loophole that allows any kind of worker from receiving these federal protections, and support state initiatives that provide additional protections that do not exclude any single kind of worker.
14. The Young Democrats supports following the example of Portugal in the decriminalization of hard drugs and medical, rehabilitative treatment of those addicted to them.
15. We strongly oppose Judeophobic/anti-Semitic and Islamophobic sentiments and expressions in public life, whether based on religion or perceived ethnicity.

### **SECTION III: ENVIRONMENT**

1. Seeing that pollution in Georgia's waterways is becoming an increasing problem, we advocate for the reduction and elimination of raw sewage being dumped into Georgia's rivers, lakes, and streams, with a special emphasis to be placed on the Chattahoochee River. We strongly believe that the surface and ground waters of the state should continue to be a public resource and should be managed in the public interest and in a sustainable manner by the state to protect natural systems and meet human and economic needs.
2. We do not believe revenues from the state's gas tax should be restricted to roads and bridges. We support an amendment to the Georgia Constitution to allow gas tax revenues to be used for green space protection, parks, mass transit, sidewalks, and bicycle trails and lanes.
3. All people have the right to clean air, water, and land. We believe that the promotion and protection of these rights, as well as reducing the harmful effects of global climate change, is consistent with, not in opposition to, a healthy and thriving economy. In order to further this effort, the Young Democrats of Georgia supports stricter emission standards and the promotion of renewable energy.
4. Although the Young Democrats support the idea of energy self-sufficiency for our nation, we oppose any efforts to exploit any federally or state protected park, wildlife refuge,



monument, historical area, land, or other protected natural habitats, including national coastlines, for the purpose of oil and/or natural gas drilling and/or exploitation.

5. The Young Democrats of Georgia support the enforcement of state and federal environmental laws to promote and exemplify the ideals of stewardship, conservation, and intelligent development. We support the authority of the EPA and other designated agencies to act as advocates of the environment by instituting appropriate regulations.
6. We support the utilization of nuclear power as a non-fossil fuel alternative that can also meet present and future energy needs until more environmentally-friendly alternatives present themselves. We also support research into fusion and the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel.
7. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports 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 Georgia General Assembly and U. S. Congress to enact legislation that will establish sustainable energy standards and sustainable energy portfolios.
8. We believe water management must be guided by a comprehensive state water management plan developed by a lead agency with a dedicated planning staff in coordination with other agencies and with the participation of all interested citizens. Effective water management requires regional water planning based on watersheds, river basins, and aquifers that is tied to implementation including an adaptive management process; and regulation of inter-basin transfers must be strengthened to reflect scientific knowledge, respect natural systems, and protect the basins of origin and receipt.
9. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the reversal of the detrimental effects of nuclear and other industrial waste management, and the compensation of citizens and municipalities negatively affected by elevated levels of radioactivity and other carcinogens due to proximity to affected sites.
10. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the responsible disposal of solid waste and recyclable materials via accessible materials via accessible waste and recyclable management centers across the state of Georgia.

#### **SECTION IV: EDUCATION**

1. We support the full funding of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act to help students with disabilities in all public schools.
2. We, the Young Democrats of Georgia, support the original purpose of the HOPE Scholarship to expand access to a college education to all Georgians, regardless of race or socioeconomic status. We support additional revenue streams for Georgia colleges in

order to bring down tuition costs and ease the Hope Scholarship's burden on lottery funds without forcing costs on students. We support HOPE expansion to include students at technical schools. Finally, we oppose any inappropriate uses of lottery funds, including but not limited to excessive administrative costs and non-public education purposes, as this would take money away from student funds.

3. Promoting diversity must remain a vital criterion in the selection of students for admission to the colleges and universities that make up the University System of Georgia. To increase educational opportunities, we must enact progressive and creative programs that assist in the development of broad and inclusive admission policies through which our publicly supported colleges and universities reflect the economic, ethnic, gender, and social diversity of Georgia. We should offer students from varied racial and socio-economic backgrounds from all of our state's high schools the opportunity to be admitted to the colleges and universities that make up the University System of Georgia.
4. Because students and teachers hail from different ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds and because the Bill of Rights must be protected, we support the separation of church and state. While religious studies have an important place in literature and history classes, public schools should refrain from implicitly or explicitly endorsing a particular religion or religious belief.
5. We support a standardized system of grading for all primary and secondary schools in Georgia.
6. We support the local involvement of parents, legal guardians, students, and teachers on school advisory boards and state education panels. Further, we encourage school districts and schools to develop comprehensive outreach programs to parents, community members, and local businesses about what involvement opportunities are available and how to participate to increase involvement of parents and community members.
7. We believe an overwhelming burden of standardized testing in our K-12 public schools promotes an unhealthy education system focused on uniform memorization at the sacrifice of individual thought, creativity, and practical learning that diminishes teachers to test-prep tutors. Standardized testing should be used for diagnostic purposes and not tied to education funding, teacher pay, or grade promotion.
8. Better education leads to better choices. In order to ensure that America's youth can make safe, responsible decisions, comprehensive sex education must be taught in schools, and access to free contraception must be provided.
9. We believe that early childhood education is supremely important to giving underprivileged children a chance to succeed. We support the national Head Start program and making our state Pre-K program free and universally accessible. We

oppose any and all cuts to these programs. We seek to expand these overwhelmingly successful programs so that all children in Georgia have a chance to succeed.

10. We believe in the value of public education as a means to better all of Georgia. Therefore we oppose any state funding of private primary and secondary educational institutions whether in the form of grants, loans, or vouchers. Furthermore, we oppose any attempt to repeal or amend Article I, Section 2, paragraph 7 of the Georgia Constitution, which prohibits state funding of religious institutions. However, where defined school systems do not have the ability to provide specialized services, for example speech therapy or services to students with disabilities, school systems should be allowed to contract for such services to better meet the needs of students.
11. We oppose any attempts to fund public schools in a regressive fashion that would hurt children in Georgia's poorest counties.
12. We support special federal and tax benefits for public school teachers, especially for teachers working in at-risk or needy areas.
13. We believe that the study of evolution in our schools is essential to students receiving a quality education. The Young Democrats of Georgia therefore oppose all attempts to abolish or undermine the place of evolution in the public education curriculum, including the addition of disclaimers to the evolution and the presentation of theories unsupported by scientific evidence as scientific alternatives to evolution.
14. The Young Democrats of Georgia recognizes the importance of scientific progress to our nation's general welfare and therefore support the equitable distribution of governmental funding for scientific endeavors, regardless of the political implications of its results. Additionally, we support the censure of officials who have suppressed scientific results for political reasons.
15. We believe that the eligibility requirements for the retention of the HOPE Scholarship should reflect the academic course of study of each student.
16. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the full funding of educational opportunities inside and outside of the classroom such as fine arts, field trips, clubs such as 4H, and physical education programs.
17. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the teaching of hunting safety as an elective course in the public school curriculum, upon completion of which the student will receive a certificate or hunting license for successfully completing the course.
18. As we understand the value of education to the growth of the state of Georgia, we reject any attempts to reduce funding for education.
19. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the adoption of a statewide anti-bullying

standard that includes protection against bullying. We believe bullying includes physical, virtual, and verbal threats to a person including verbal taunting and public name-calling with intent to humiliate. Local school boards and schools need a framework from which to protect children and provide conflict mediation.

20. In order to promote safer driving practices among our most at-risk group of drivers, we support the creation and funding of a mandatory, comprehensive drivers education course at the high school level, throughout the state of Georgia.
21. The Young Democrats of Georgia is opposed to any system that bases teacher salaries on student performance. A merit-based pay system will reward teachers in affluent district and encourage teachers in less affluent areas to move to said district. This system will further the education gap between rural and suburban students.
22. In order to ensure a fiscally responsible society, we support the creation and funding of an elective domestic finances class at the high school level with a special emphasis to be placed on credit maintenance and long term financial planning.
23. We support allowing any academically qualified candidates to attend college in the state of Georgia, and we oppose any ban on enrollment at a Georgia college or university on undocumented individuals. We further reject any legislation that defunds or penalizes sanctuary campuses.
24. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the placement of an LGBTQIA resource center in every Georgia institution of higher education that receives any public funding to help questioning youth in their journey of self-discovery and provide support for all LGBTQIA individuals.
25. The Young Democrats of Georgia rejects the creation of charter schools by any entity other than the democratically-elected local school boards, and believes that decisions made by locally elected school boards should be upheld and respected.
26. The Young Democrats of Georgia recognizes the importance of a well-rounded K-12 education, including focuses on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education for the purpose of increasing the job readiness and opportunities of all Georgians in the global marketplace.
27. The Young Democrats of Georgia opposes the redistricting of public schools based on separation of race, income levels or other socioeconomic characteristics.
28. The Young Democrats of Georgia strongly opposes the use of furloughs to balance the budget.
29. We support the hiring of school counselors to meet the 250 student-to-counselor ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association and support

comprehensive counseling programs to address bullying, college prep, and career guidance.

30. We support civic engagement programs in all Georgia high schools in order to foster greater civic involvement. We also support voter registration of graduating seniors.
31. We support community school programming such as GED programs, after school programs, and recreational activities which will provide our districts with services, activities, and opportunities beneficial to local community development.
32. We support the Student Aid Bill of Rights in its capacity to provide every student with access to a quality, affordable education at a college that's cutting costs and increasing learning, access the resources needed to pay for college, the right to an affordable repayment plan for any loans, and the right to quality customer service, reliable information, and fair treatment, even if they struggle to repay their loans.
33. The Young Democrats of Georgia support the efforts to increase access to higher education through free community and technical college.
34. The Young Democrats of Georgia support the dismantling of practices that lead to disproportionate suspension and disciplining of marginalized groups.
35. We support a reduction of homework assignments for all grades up to 9th grade if they are used less for assessment of skills and more for assessment of rote. Similar to standardized testing, we believe that too much homework can be disadvantageous to the mental and physical health of younger students.
36. We deplore that the Georgia Board of Regents has banned undocumented students from attending certain Georgia public universities and disqualified them from qualifying for in-state tuition. We oppose these two bans and support in-state tuition to all those who meet the Georgia residency requirements, regardless of legal status.
37. We support the forgiveness of all student loan debt and interest.

## **SECTION V: URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

1. The Young Democrats of Georgia advocates policies that reduce the urban sprawl and environmental issues presented by over-reliance on automobiles. We support alternatives such as a statewide passenger rail system and planned community development, and free, accessible, and expanded public transit as well as support for the extension of sidewalks and bicycle paths to all residential areas for all abilities.
2. Twenty-first century society demands clean transportation systems that build communities and promote smart growth. In order to tackle the problems faced by rapid

growth and environmental degradation, state transportation funding must be spent equally around the state based on population.

3. The Young Democrats of Georgia condemns the construction or renovation of highways, MARTA rail, or other infrastructure when such construction favors corporate development over private property rights or public housing and recreational facilities.
4. We believe all people should have access to healthy diets and urge better urban planning to prevent “food deserts”, areas of relative exclusion where people experience physical and economic barriers to accessing healthy food.
5. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the creation of a secondary city limit encompassing all of Metro Atlanta to give the city of Atlanta limited authority of taxation and urban planning over its satellite communities.
6. The Young Democrats of Georgia opposes any efforts to reconstitute or recreate Milton County.
7. We support investing in metro Atlanta’s public transit. We encourage our state legislators to once again allocate funds to MARTA in the state budget to better foster, develop, and innovate our regional transportation system. We also support the expansion of MARTA to further provide for the growing population of the city of Atlanta and the metro area.
8. The Young Democrats of Georgia support the revitalization of Underground Atlanta to become an economically viable area for visitors and residents alike.
9. The Young Democrats of Georgia oppose gentrification as a method to exclude people of color and people in poverty from the development process of constantly changing urban areas.
10. To maximize economic development, decrease traffic congestion, and provide reliable transportation options for citizens and visitors the Young Democrats Of Georgia support the creation of a Transit Rail Expansion Commission or similar entity to create a statewide regional rail plan for the State of Georgia and recommend changes to current programs and policies to the Governor and General Assembly.
11. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports affordable housing options across the state, including accessible options for the aging population.
12. The Young Democrats of Georgia support restrictions on further zoning of land for single-family occupancy and conversion of more single-family-zoned residential areas to multi-family usage. We recognize the role of single-family zoning in the advancement of redlining and institutional discrimination against people of color and lesser means, as

well as its role in furthering carbon emissions and climate change, and support the construction of more multi-family occupancy homes closer to mass transit.

## **SECTION VI: HEALTH ISSUES**

1. We believe that all persons, regardless of incarceration and citizenship status, should have access to all reproductive options, including education, contraception, and abortion when necessary, regardless of socio-economic status. We fully support all provisions of the Roe v. Wade decision of the Supreme Court in 1973.
2. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the establishment of a single-payer universal health care system, including dental and vision care. We support the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act as a good first step toward achieving this goal.
3. Patients and doctors should not have to absorb the costs of poor investments by insurance companies. A cap on court-ordered damages in malpractice cases fails to adequately recognize the pain and suffering experienced by Georgia citizens.
4. We support fully funding PeachCare for Kids and the provision of full, comprehensive healthcare for all children in America.
5. In the interest of protecting the physical and emotional health of young men, the Young Democrats of Georgia believes that no individual under the age of 18 should be required to produce one or more legal guardians in person before obtaining an abortion or other contraceptive, such as Plan B.
6. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the study and research of medicinal uses of marijuana, and we support the enforcement of the state's Controlled Substances Therapeutic Research Act.
7. As stem cell research holds great promise in the field of medicine, the Young Democrats of Georgia supports the removal of barriers in this line of research and promote appropriate public funding to ensure continual research.
8. The Young Democrats of Georgia recognizes the great sacrifice made by those members of our armed forces who are injured or killed in the line of duty. We support the expansion of programs to provide assistance to these men and women and their families as they recover from the debilitating effects of war on their own lives.
9. We recognize the pervasiveness of synthetic food products and support policies that reduce the use of high-fructose corn syrup and other hydrogenated oils in our daily lives.
10. We support funding and education of S.T.I. prevention and overall sexual health.

11. We support adequate funding for HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and research. We believe every person living with HIV/AIDS should receive adequate funding for HIV/AIDS medications.
12. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the expansion of Medicaid in line with the full implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.
13. The Young Democrats of Georgia opposes any unnecessary or invasive physical procedures or forced counseling, which place any hindrances, obstacles, or otherwise attempts to interfere with a person's right to obtain an abortion.
14. The Young Democrats of Georgia oppose any attempt to impose legislation or constitutional amendment that would define personhood as beginning at conception.
15. We support funding for the treatment, prevention, and full continuum of community-based supports that help Georgians seeking recovery from substance use and mental health challenges.
16. 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.
17. We believe that all people have the right to adequate health facilities such as hospitals, outpatient clinics and practices, and critical care units at a reasonable distance. These facilities should be protected and maintained for the benefit of all Georgians.
18. The Young Democrats of Georgia know that when workers are forced to work while ill, injured, or sick, not only do they endanger themselves and their families, they endanger everyone else with whom they come in contact. We support universal paid and job-protected sick leave, not to exclude any workers, regardless of sector, classification, wage, or legal status, of at least 2 weeks per year. We support the expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act to include farm workers, domestic workers, and all other workers it currently excludes.

## **SECTION VII: ELECTIONS**

1. Democracy is the greatest experiment our nation and our state have attempted. Trusting the people to make informed decisions about their welfare and their society is the best form of government to promote the common good and to maintain peace. The Young Democrats of Georgia believes our government is best served when many citizens vote. As such we advocate making every general election in the month of November a national holiday.
2. The Young Democrats of Georgia believes that the existing Presidential primary system gives undue influence to certain states at the expense of states such as Georgia.



Therefore, we support changes to the Presidential primary system that would give all states an equal opportunity to influence the selection of the Democratic Presidential nominee.

3. The Young Democrats of Georgia pledges to work with organizations' constituent chapters to ensure that national resources and attention are focused on Southern states in current and future elections and campaigns. Local and state candidates are placed at a disadvantage when national campaigns divert manpower and money from the South to other states. Over half of the nation's African-American population is disenfranchised when Democratic candidates in the South are denied the Party support to organize and fund winning statewide campaigns.
4. The Young Democrats of Georgia support immediate statehood to Washington, D.C. and granting self-determination, including independence, and full reparations to Puerto Rico as well as other U.S. Territories.
5. We believe that the Electoral College no longer serves a purpose in an America where information on presidential candidates is readily available and easily accessible. Therefore, we support a constitutional amendment that would abolish the Electoral College and provide for the election of the president by direct popular vote, as well as Georgia's ratification of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.
6. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the adoption of uniform standards for conducting state and federal elections as well as uniform standards for the recounting of ballots in disputed elections. We further call for a reliable, voter verifiable paper trail in all elections using hand-marked paper ballots
7. So that equality and nondiscrimination may be forever protected by law, we support making the Voting Rights Act of 1965 permanent. Furthermore, we support efforts to expand the Act's provisions to apply to all states in the Union.
8. The Young Democrats of Georgia believes that elections should be free and fair. We oppose any legislation that will require a photo ID at the polls on Election Day because it places an undue strain on rural, elderly, and minority voters who may not have the means to obtain a government-issued photo ID.
9. The Young Democrats opposes any efforts to redraw legislative districts in order to gain a political advantage or to disenfranchise the youth and minority vote. In pursuit of this goal, we support the use of a non-partisan, outside method of redistricting.
10. The Young Democrats of Georgia believes that redrawing legislative and district lines should only be done once every ten years, following the national census. Individual states should pass laws to this effect.
11. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the extension of early voting to include the

Saturday, Sunday, and Monday before Election Day.

12. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the introduction of Instant Runoff Voting at all levels of government for single-winner elections.
13. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports punitive measures for elected officials who switch parties after an election without first resigning their position.
14. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports extending voter registration deadlines to include same-day registration.
15. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the adoption of sensible national standards for the governing of elections and a national voter registration database that would help voters stay registered despite moving or changes in life circumstances.
16. We support the pre-registration of voters at age 16. We support instituting a policy of automatic voter registration.
17. To ensure and support better representation, governance, and faith in democracy, the Young Democrats of Georgia supports the adoption of an Iowa-style nonpartisan redistricting commission to ensure that partisan politics does not influence the proper execution of the democratic process.
18. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the reintroduction and advocacy of a stronger, modernized Voting Rights Act. In addition, we support the enactment of a Georgia Voting Rights Act which matches and expands upon the protections in a stronger federal Voting Rights Act.
19. In the interest of democratic empowerment, the Young Democrats of Georgia support legalizing public ballot initiatives which require the submission of petitions and the gathering of a minimum amount of valid, verifiable signatures from voters to be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval for the ballot in a general election year. We also support this for advisory/non-binding, statute and constitutional questions (for both initiative and repeal) at city, county and state levels, all with the approval of the Secretary of State for the ballot.
20. In the interest of encouraging voter literacy and responsibility toward their elected lawmakers and to reduce overlapping districts between chambers, the Young Democrats of Georgia support standard redistricting principles.
21. The Young Democrats of Georgia support making midterm and presidential election days federal and state holidays.

22. To maintain election security, the Young Democrats of Georgia support measures to implement a neutral, nonpartisan commission to perform state and local elections.
23. To ensure an end to the zero-sum thinking which fuels partisan and racial bias in redistricting, we support FairVote's proposal for the replacement of single-winner districts in the U.S. House of Representatives with multi-winner districts consisting of an odd number of elected representatives to be elected through ranked-choice voting, and support the extension of this proposal to state, county and municipal legislative branches.
24. We support amending the U.S. Constitution to include an affirmative right to vote, as well as amending both the U.S. and Georgia state Constitutions to include an affirmative right to free, equal and open elections.
25. We support the right of voters to vote from home using absentee ballots without a need for any excuse, the adoption and equal distribution of ballot drop-off boxes throughout all neighborhoods to support the return of absentee ballots to alleviate any collection pressure on the United States Postal Service, prepaid postage for absentee ballots and ballot requests, and allowing voters to place themselves on an automatic absentee ballot request list for as long as they see fit and remain residents of Georgia. We also support the enshrinement of the right to universal no-excuse absentee voting into the Georgia State Constitution.
26. We support the re-enfranchisement of all those who have been disenfranchised as a result of criminal offences, including those currently serving their sentences in prison. We support the abolition of felony disenfranchisement as a practice.
27. We support a public campaign finance system to be implemented across the United States and used at the local, state and federal level.

## **SECTION VIII: INTERNATIONAL POLICY**

1. Although Young Democrats support the right of this nation to defend itself and its borders, we believe that our nation is at its strongest and serves its interests best when we work in concert and coordination with our allies and other members of the international community rather than acting alone.
2. We believe that this nation is founded on the strengths of immigrants who sought a better future in the United States. Immigration reform is vitally important to continued economic prosperity, and equality of rights in the State of Georgia. There should be a path to citizenship for immigrants who already reside in the U.S. illegally and are not felons.
3. The Young Democrats of Georgia believes that all active duty armed forces, serving in a

combat zone during a time of conflict should be entitled to the same pay scale, benefits, and pension.

4. We oppose the use of torture as defined by the Geneva Conventions and the indefinite detention without due process by the federal government for any reason.
5. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the UN Millennium Development Goals and the federal government fully following through on its commitments to pledge 0.7% of GDP in real aid to developing countries. We recognize the Millennium Development Goals as one of the best ways to strengthen the US in the global community and at home.
6. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the United Nations Organization and its role in international peacemaking, peacekeeping, and providing humanitarian aid.
7. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports international agreements and organizations that limit nuclear weapons proliferation and promote safe use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
8. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports reducing the United States' dependence on foreign oil, in part by increasing fuel efficiency standards and domestic renewable energy production.
9. We oppose any exchange of nuclear technology with nations that are not signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
10. In an effort to promote regional stability in West Asia, we oppose actions of the Israeli and Palestinian governments that violate human rights. We support the movement to end international support for the Israeli government's occupation of Palestinian land and oppression of Palestinians' human rights, and pressure the Israeli government to comply with international law. Furthermore, we support the reduction of US Government support for either government if they continue such actions. We support a peace negotiated in good faith and mutual respect between Israelis and Palestinians, whether it leads to two viable states of Israel and Palestine, or leads to one secular, multiethnic democratic state for both Israelis and Palestinians. We also oppose the moving of the Israeli capital from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as an unnecessary provocation. We support the right of Americans to engage in the Boycott, Divestments and Sanctions (BDS) movement, and will defend boycotts as a constitutional right.
11. We believe every US citizen should be treated as equal as stated by the Constitution and no discrimination for people should be tolerated because of the place of their birth, nor should anyone be treated as a "second-class citizen" for the same reason.
12. We support policies that prevent human trafficking globally, including but not limited to domestic legislation and international treaties that impose harsh punishments on those that perpetuate such human rights violations.

13. We support the safe and regulated local and international resettlement of refugees. We further affirm the United States' humanitarian obligation to displaced persons.
14. We support the movement for Kurdish self-determination and oppose the oppression of the Kurdish people by the Turkish, Syrian, Iraqi and Iranian governments. We particularly oppose the violence being waged against Syrian Kurds by the Turkish military.
15. We oppose the suppression of minorities by oppressive regimes and support domestic efforts to secularize government and politics and protect minority rights, including religious, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender identity minorities, in the United States and abroad, while respecting the right to freedom of expression.
16. We support the efforts of the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement and support the government of Taiwan (the Republic of China) in resisting the attempts by the People's Republic of China to threaten and curtail their sovereignty, and further support the inclusion of Taiwan in United Nations bodies such as the World Health Organization. We also oppose the aggression of China in the South China Sea against their neighbors.
17. We oppose the Chinese government's actions to oppress native peoples, like the Uyghurs and Tibetans.
18. We support the drastic reduction of the size of and funding for the U.S. military.

## **SECTION IX: ECONOMIC POLICY**

1. Each generation should build its fortune upon its own ingenuity, not upon the wealth of the preceding generation. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the inheritance tax. This will encourage more charitable giving and help society pay for important programs.
2. We support family farms over agribusiness. We call for farm plans designed to help family farmers.
3. To promote American agriculture, fair labor, standards, and the environment, we support tariffs for goods produced in countries lacking comparable labor and environmental standards to the U.S.
4. We believe that this country was founded on the backs of laborers and we must honor and protect the hardest working among us. We support all laws that allow workers to organize and collectively bargain. We oppose all laws and practices that dilute workers' rights, including right-to-work legislation.
5. In order to ensure equal access and equal opportunity for all Americans, we support affirmative action programs as part of equal opportunity employment practices and

encourage hiring a work force that is diverse in age, cultural heritage, disability, economic status, sex, race, views on religion, sexual orientation or identity, employment status, and credit worthiness.

6. Because all Americans deserve to be treated equally and fairly, we strongly support all local, state, and federal legislation that aims to close the pay gap in America and offers equal pay for equal work regardless of sex, ethnicity, or religion.
7. The Young Democrats of Georgia, as inheritors of the legacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt, rejects any attempt to weaken our nation's promise of social security. In particular, we hold that privatization would cripple our economy with further debt and harm the long-term health of the program, while benefiting investment companies rather than the people who pay into the system.
8. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports private property rights and a reasonable use of eminent domain for public use only.
9. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports strengthening laws against predatory lending.
10. We believe that large budget deficits, at the federal level, place an undue strain on the U.S. economy at home, reduce the value of the dollar abroad, and leave future generations of Americans with the unnecessary burden of paying down a debt they didn't create. However, we oppose any attempt to balance the government budget by weakening programs which support the needs of the working class, such as Headstart, Social Security, and Medicare. In addition, we support and emphasize efforts to stimulate the economy by supporting the basic needs of working and middle-class people, but not stimuli which benefit the desires of corporations' owners over working-class people.
11. To support the dignity of all Americans, the Young Democrats of Georgia supports a social safety net that will ensure that all Americans can have food to eat and a place to sleep.
12. To allow more entrepreneurial activity by Americans and more participation by women and parents, we support a system of government-subsidized day care.
13. While we support the use of federal power to set minimum standards and conditions for life in America, we oppose the use of federal power to prohibit states from engaging in beneficial experiments and maintaining their role as "laboratories of democracy."
14. We believe all people regardless of socioeconomic status should have access to affordable housing.
15. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports legislation to provide financial disincentives to Georgia corporations moving employment either to another country or inside a prison

system.

16. We believe that current minimum wage levels are far too low to support our working families. We support all efforts on the local, state, and national levels to provide a living wage to our hard working labor force and we support One Fair Wage, eliminating the sub-minimum wages that allow disabled, tipped, youth, and many other workers to be paid less than the minimum wage. We support phasing out the sub-minimum wages by increasing the sub-minimum wages until it becomes the minimum/living wage.
17. A person's freedom of innovation should never be inhibited by any corporation. Therefore any clause in a contract that requires the innovations of an employee made on that employee's time using employee resources to be property of the corporation should be prohibited.
18. We as Young Democrats believe that small business is the growth engine of our economy. We call for development monies to be spent in increased support and guidance to new business.
19. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports strong regulation of all natural monopolies, such as natural gas and telephone service, to prevent consumer gouging through sham competition.
20. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the recognition of unions based on worker support as expressed through a "card-check" system.
21. The Young Democrats of Georgia believes that state and federally controlled funds should divest from any nation where genocide is internationally recognized as occurring.
22. The Young Democrats of Georgia understands that a right to fire is a right to starve. We therefore support amending Georgia law to replace Georgia's at-will employment laws with a requirement that employees be bound by a covenant of good faith and fair dealing.
23. We support a tax system that provides for diversity of sources to provide the most stable possible revenue stream for the state.
24. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the state park system and the hunting, fishing, and tourism industry. We oppose the privatization of our state parks in part, or in whole.
25. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports the regulation of banking and investment industries, with a focus of reducing risk and promoting safer lending practices. Further, support the tethering of Executive Compensation to corporation performance. Finally, The Young Democrats of Georgia oppose the excessive contract buyouts given to corporate executives when they are removed from the company.

26. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports renewed federal restrictions on television and radio media consolidation.
27. To ensure that sales taxes owed to the state and local government are collected appropriately and timely, the Young Democrats of Georgia supports the point-of-sale collection of all sales taxes and the flow of information concerning business licenses and sales tax certificates between local governments and the state.
28. We support the implementation of a federal transaction tax which would place a small fee on all transactions on a financial market such as the New York Stock Exchange.
29. We support the celebration of significant historical events, such as the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the American Civil War, the founding museums, and the preservation of lands for the purpose of developing an economy that takes advantage of collecting heritage tourism dollars from visitors to this state.
30. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports updating state regulations on beer and malt beverages to match those for wine, including permitting direct brewery sales for on- and off-premise consumption, increasing allowable yearly home production from 50 to 200 gallons, and raising the maximum alcohol content from 14% alcohol by volume (A.B.V.) to 21% A.B.V.
31. The Young Democrats of Georgia proposes tax returns be accompanied by a receipt to inform taxpayers how their individual contribution is distributed among state and federal programs.
32. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports food stamps' more widespread acceptance at local farmers' markets, and further supports their being worth twice face value when used at such locations to allow the impoverished better access to healthy food while encouraging local agriculture.
33. In an effort to expand government transparency, we strongly support the public disclosure of documents pertaining to tax incentives given to corporations that choose to relocate to, or expand in, our state.
34. The Young Democrats of Georgia support the creation of an expansive public transit system including but not limited to regional rail for the state of Georgia.
35. The Young Democrats of Georgia supports allowing counties to join together in joint economic development projects without requiring the approval of the Georgia General Assembly.
36. The Young Democrats of Georgia support local municipalities spearheading and leading on issues such as living wages, rent control and affordable housing, paid sick and parental leave, and workers' rights. However, through Georgia's preemption law, local



municipalities are banned from passing ordinances or laws that address these issues. As such, we support repealing Georgia's preemption law.

37. We support social safety nets that protect our most vulnerable, and we support a Universal Basic Income (UBI) and a Federal Jobs Guarantee (FJG). We know recessions cannot be predicted, and the actual level of joblessness over a given year is unknown—much as it is with large-scale disasters or smaller, localized events—the funding would have to fluctuate with need. This can be accomplished in two ways: 1) the base appropriations can be adjusted as needed using the Budget Control Act, which permits some increases in discretionary spending; and 2) unexpected annual increases in UBI/FJG funding can be provided through supplemental appropriations bills that offer funding not subject to spending caps or budgetary controls. The FJG program is a countercyclical buffer, a complement to private sector activity. It expands in recessions and contracts in expansions, thus providing the needed countercyclical stabilization.

## **SECTION X: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND CULTURE**

1. The Young Democrats of Georgia support the promotion, development, funding and proliferation of free and open-source software, open formats, open protocols, open hardware specifications, open patents and other open standards in technology and culture for the furtherance of the intellectual and creative commons. We support the rights to use, study, share and improve software and other free, open content, as defined by the Free Software Foundation.
2. We support the usage and patronage of free, open tools in both governments and progressive political organizations to ensure transparency, security, extensiveness and longevity to data produced through these organizations.
3. We support the right to repair.
4. We support the return of the fairness doctrine to broadcasting news media.
5. We support the usage of secure remote voting to ensure the maintenance of business in all legislative bodies even when members are not available to attend. We also support the modernization of legislative and research technology in the legislative branch at federal and state levels in order to ensure access to and accuracy of information for legislators.
6. We support expanding access to high-speed broadband internet into rural areas to ensure that residents in rural Georgia can more fully participate in civil life and the economy. We also support the incentivizing of local electric cooperatives to build broadband networks for their members.
7. We support open access to peer-reviewed research for all people, and oppose placing a monetary premium on medical and scientific research.

8. We support the reinstatement and full funding of medical and scientific offices which have either been dismantled or targeted for interference by Republican conservative politicians.
9. We support the right of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to study gun violence as a health problem, and oppose all attempts to censor CDC research.
10. We oppose the sale of personal data to advertisers, and oppose making private data corporately-owned property that would need to be purchased in order to be used.
11. We support the right of users to retain access and ownership to the data they produce on for-profit websites, and support the right of users to download their personal information.
12. We support the right of media organizations to delete and ban hateful, violent, malicious, abusive, disinformational, inhumane or anti-democratic content from their platforms, as well as to prohibit those users and organizations who repeatedly traffic in such content from using or connecting to their platforms, no matter what position of leadership or influence such users or organizations may hold in society.
13. We support the return, retention and full funding of local news media organizations, even in a non-profit state of organization.
14. We oppose the abuse of redistricting technology to abuse the democratic rights of the people.
15. We support the development of more robust means of ensuring trust in transactions over the Internet, including the blockchain.
16. We support all initiatives to make sure that our technology, including artificial intelligence, reflects nuance, empathy and diversity of background, so that our technology will not feed to the world the bias which humanity too often puts into the technology.
17. We support extending access to technology and communications for those who are differently abled.
18. We oppose any religious or conscientious exceptions to mandatory vaccines for children, and strongly oppose disinformation campaigns which have defamed vaccines.
19. We support the removal of archaic telephone and cable rules and regulations to protect the incumbent telecommunications providers who have refused to upgrade broadband technologies.

20. We oppose the removal of telecommunication companies from any list including but not limited to the “last right of refusal.”
21. We oppose the extension of copyright to well beyond the death of the author. We support the limitation of copyright to up to 50 years after an author's death, after which we support the entry of the content into the public domain.
22. We support the incorporation, publication and usage of public-domain or freely-licensed books and educational tools in free, open digital formats for public education in Georgia and nationwide, so that our public education system will not have to force students to pay exorbitant amounts of money for proprietary digital school books and other educational media.
23. We affirm the fair use and first sale doctrines of copyrighted works in all mediums.
24. We advocate for greater privacy protection and the protection of personally identifiable information of law-abiding Internet consumers.
25. We support reclassification of ISPs (Internet Service Providers) by the FCC as common carriers and urge the promulgation and enforcement of robust net neutrality regulations to create an Internet without any speed or content access preference.
26. We vehemently defend the right to engage in First Amendment protected speech critical of the U.S. or any government by opposing all legislative and other efforts to penalize or criminalize such speech.
27. We support the view that all communications should be protected from warrantless search and seizure as guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution.
28. We combat efforts to legitimize or justify discrimination or hate speech based on gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, hair style or texture, or national origin, recognizing that discriminatory, hateful or offensive language or conduct may be perceived based on the experience and viewpoints of the targeted persons or groups.
29. We call for the creation of a new flag for the state of Georgia, the design of which would vexillologically and coherently reflect the geography of this land and the unity of its peoples without any reference to the iconography of the Confederate States of America nor to the Great Seal of the State of Georgia.
30. We support the removal of monuments to the Confederate States of America, as well as to individuals and actions which furthered violent acts of white supremacy, from public property in this state. We also support the repeal of state laws which criminalize or sanction the removal of Confederate or racial-supremacist monuments by local

governments in accordance with their democratic decisions.