

# Platform - 2024

of the

## Georgia Green Party

As adopted by the  
Wrightsville Nominating Convention - June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1998

and amended by eleven subsequent Conventions in Americus - April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1999, Americus - March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2000 Brunswick - June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2000 Athens - May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2001 Macon - May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2002 Pooler - May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2003, Roswell – October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015 - Bonaire – February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, Online Nominating Convention, June 25-27, 2020, Online Annual Convention, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Online Nominating Convention, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and Online Nominating Convention, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

As ratified on June 2, 2024  
by the Coordinating Council of the Georgia Green Party:

Denice Traina *co-chair*, Kristin Zebrowski *co-chair*,  
Ayman Fadel *treasurer*, Hugh Esco *clerk*,  
Steve Carr, John Fortuin, Christi Inglis, Michael Inglis, Bradley Smith

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*Paid for by the Georgia Green Party, Ayman Fadel, Treasurer*

GGP:CC Proposal #2024-\_\_: Ayman Fadel offers the following:

To provide for the approval of Platform - 2024 of the Georgia Green Party following multiple amendments approved during the 2024 Nominating Convention conducted online.

A Resolution  
of the Coordinating Council  
of the Georgia Green Party

Whereas, the by-laws of the Georgia Green Party provide that the Annual Convention of the Party may adopt a platform; and

Whereas, the Party's State Committee approved at its December 23, 2023 meeting an up-to-date version of its Platform,

Whereas, the 2024 Online Nominating Convention approved amendments regarding arms transfers, the definition of antisemitism, ending corporate plundering of the resources of other nations and states, repealing plank related to parents' choices about vaccines;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Coordinating Council, ratifies IDB #2024-\_\_: Approval of 2024 Online Nominating Convention Amendment to the 2022 Platform of the Georgia Green Party.

RESOLVED, that the Web Clerk and Web Team are directed to publish this version of the platform on the web site of the Georgia Green Party.

RESOLVED, that the Quick Decision Council is authorized to provide for the publication to our members and to the public of *Platform – 2024 of the Georgia Green Party* on the web or by excerpt in brochures, press releases, tabloids, flyers and other suitable means of sharing the Party's positions on important issues with the general public and the media.

RESOLVED, that the members of the Coordinating Council are authorized and encouraged to speak and write publicly on behalf of the Party on the issues addressed in this Platform, being careful to distinguish Party policy from personal positions.

RESOLVED, that in publishing the Platform, the Party shall invite interested Georgians to get involved with the Party, to organize affiliated locals to send delegates to the future Convention, to offer their input to expand and refine this Platform and to work with the Party and in their communities for the fulfillment of the Green vision articulated in this document.

RESOLVED, that the Political Coordinator may publish a version of the Platform, line-numbered for reference and discussion, and distribute it as part of a package on local organizing developed in cooperation with the Local Affiliation Committee for not more than \$35.00 as a merchandise item, and for free to organizing or affiliated locals for internal duplication and distribution.

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## Georgia Green Party

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### *Table of Contents*

AGRICULTURE .....	4
AUTO INSURANCE .....	7
CATASTROPHIC CLIMATE CRISIS.....	9
CRIMINAL JUSTICE.....	15
DEMOCRACY .....	18
ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY .....	21
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....	24
EDUCATION.....	25
ELECTRIC RE-REGULATION.....	29
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE .....	31
FAMILY.....	34
FOREIGN POLICY .....	37
FORESTS.....	41
GLOBAL POPULATION.....	43
HEALTH CARE.....	45
HUMAN RIGHTS .....	48
PUBLIC UTILITIES.....	57
SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS.....	58
TAXES .....	59
TRANSPORTATION AND LAND-USE .....	61
VETERANS.....	63

# AGRICULTURE

*Create higher quality foods with lower environmental and community damage*

Modern Industrial Agriculture has been a mixed blessing. While large factory farms are producing more food than ever before, meat and produce products have actually become hazardous for consumers. Toxin levels are increasing, and overall quality of food is decreasing.

Many factory farm techniques exhaust organic nutrients in farmlands, creating the need for higher and higher levels of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. As a result, soils, rivers, and products are being poisoned. Finally, agricultural conglomerates have forced most small farmers out of business, consigning farm labor largely to immigrants who work in hazardous conditions with no benefits, no legal protections, and very little pay.

In all, short-term savings and profits are coming at the expense of substantial long-term damage -- for the consumer, for the environment, and for the farmer. The Green Party of Georgia offers the following reforms as a starting point for the dialogue on Agriculture:

1. ***Keep Corporate Money Out of Politics***

Policymakers will make better decisions about agriculture if large political donations from agribusiness interests are prohibited. The interests of consumers and community must take precedence over private interests.

2. ***Support and Develop Ecological, Organic, and Bio-Dynamic Farming Methods***

Vegetables and fruits can be raised without chemicals. They're a lot healthier to eat that way, and they end up tasting better, too. Moreover, natural techniques re-generate the earth, instead of exhausting it. We need to phase out poisons in agriculture and phase out ecologically destructive practices such as factory farming and mono-cropping; in their place we need to implement organic and bio-dynamic farming techniques. We need to research and teach these techniques and methods in agricultural schools.

3. ***Support a Moratorium on Genetically Modified Organisms in Agriculture***

We don't need these, and the risks of putting them to use are too enormous. Nature's wisdom in creating the existing divisions between species developed over the course of more than a billion years. It is astonishingly presumptuous for profit-minded corporations and investors to imagine that in a few short decades we can make deep, radical changes in these boundaries without serious repercussions, and it is politically contemptuous to visit these repercussions on everyone without their universal consent.

4. ***Develop Consumer-Right-to-Know Labeling Laws***

It is unfair that all manner of pesticides, hormones, radiation and genetic engineering are used on food and fiber crops and the results sold without labeling what was used--while organic growers are required to pay for intricate certification procedures in order to prove they are not using any of the above. Political decency requires that all the insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, hormones, radiation and genetic modification used to produce or process food crops be listed on labels when they are sold.

5. ***Healthy School Lunches***

Prohibit the use of BGH-treated dairy products, irradiated meats and produce and the products of genetic engineering in the preparation of school lunches. Phase-out over seven years all non-organic meats and produce from school lunches. Establish a unit of the Cooperative Extension Agency, Board of Regents to cooperate with the Georgia Organic Growers Association to assist farmers in the transition from the use of Chemical inputs to operating practices that will allow for Organic Certification.

6. ***Support Local Farmers***

We will require that government institutional buyers give purchasing preference to products of local Farmers. We would make local purchasing a criterion in the award of government contracts.

7. ***Phase Out Factory Animal Farms, and Replace Them with Pasture Farms***

Most meat animals raised today in America spend their entire lives packed in dark boxes, shoulder to shoulder with other animals, knee- to hip-deep in their own waste. The meat from these animals is unhealthy to eat. The waste from these farms pollutes entire rivers. And the production of the grains used to feed these animals relies heavily on chemical fertilizers and techniques that deplete farmlands (see #2). Carefully managed pasture farms would feed livestock naturally (and less expensively), and sunshine, mobility, and organic diet would vastly improve quality of their meat. Animal wastes would be used to build topsoil of the pastures.

8. ***Develop Requirements for Composting Animal Confinement Wastes***

Presently the concentration, holding and disposal of urine, manure and carcasses in animal confinement operations pollutes our air, surface water and ground water. Composting these materials for use as fertility inputs would transform them from pollutive wastes into valuable assets.

9. ***Investigate Alternate Sources of (Pulp) Fiber, Food and Oil***

We have to use trees for lumber, but we probably don't need them to produce paper pulp. First, we should maximize recycled content in all paper (and other) products. Next, alternate sources of fiber such as kenaf, bamboo and hemp (the non-narcotic kind) are faster and cheaper to grow. At the same time, keeping more trees standing cleans more pollution (carbon dioxide) from the atmosphere and saves more wildlife habitat.

10. ***Educate Farmers***

No farmer sets out to destroy the environment and produce unhealthy food -- market forces and current agricultural techniques create these phenomena. We need to teach organic and bio-dynamic farming methods to working farmers, and to young farmers in schools. As the average age of farmers pushes 70, a new emphasis on Urban Farm Schools is necessary and appropriate.

11. ***Educate Consumers***

No consumer sets out to buy toxic foods. What we don't know, however, really is hurting us. A Nutrition Awareness Program could educate consumers about health implications and issues surrounding both factory- and organically-grown produce and meat.

12. ***Encourage Municipal Composting and Recycling of Biological Wastes***  
Composting turns these liabilities into assets. Cities need only to be shown how.

## AUTO INSURANCE

*If we need to buy it, make the prices fair.*

Auto insurance companies claim that high jury awards and large numbers of fraud cases force them to jack up insurance rates. Yet the past five years have shown record profits for nearly all the major auto insurers.

Legislators have made auto insurance mandatory in the state of Georgia (and nearly every other state). We question the justice of that law. We wonder if a state mandate for auto insurance would have passed in an environment of publicly funded elections. We view this as another example of corporate welfare. But we do maintain that if we are required to purchase insurance, (or anything else for that matter), the sellers of this commodity shouldn't be getting rich off us.

At the same time, rampant medical and legal fraud is becoming increasingly expensive -- for the consumer. More often than not, insurers take a *why bother* attitude when prosecuting bogus claims, because they know they can pass the costs directly on to the rest of us. Good drivers are footing the bill for bad drivers, resulting in an annual premium penalty of hundreds of dollars per driver.

To foster auto insurance policies that truly protect the public, the Green Party will:

1. ***Make Auto Insurance Optional***

While we understand that it can be prudent to carry insurance and do not intend to impair any contracts by lenders which require insurance, we oppose the state laws which prohibit operating an uninsured vehicle. This creates a class barrier to jobs and other necessary travel and serves to criminalize poor people for their poverty.

2. ***Demand Accountability***

Medical and legal fraud could be, and should be, more aggressively prosecuted by insurance companies. Let the insurance companies recover their losses at their own expense through tighter claims review and civil litigation.

3. ***Mandate Immediate Rate Reduction***

Impose a 20% reduction in auto insurance rates. Our program would closely parallel California's Proposition 103. This program's success in California has led to a 1% increase in average premiums since 1988, compared with 32% nationwide. The California proposition mandated a 20% reduction in premiums and is yielding great results. The Greens played a major role in pushing the legislation through in California.

4. ***End Discrimination***

Prohibit rate discrimination based on sex, race, or income under the guise of geographical risk factors. Premium rates should be determined by drivers' personal records and age only.

5. ***Deny Automatic and Arbitrary Decision-Making***

We will eliminate automatic rate increases and provide consumers the right to challenge the cancellation of their insurance policies.

6. ***Reject Caps on Awards***

Insurance companies have no right to penalize us for exercising our rights in court. We will maintain our right to pursue tort claims for pain and suffering, with no limitations imposed other than the good conscience of an impartial jury.

7. ***Require Legislator Integrity***

Legislators with direct ties to the insurance industry -- clear conflicts of interest -- should not be allowed to write legislation for the industry.

8. ***Create the Office of Public Advocate***

The office of a full-time administrator should be created to act on behalf of the taxpayers and consumers, not the insurance companies. This Public Advocate would monitor the insurance companies' profits and methods of rate determination and challenge all rate increases.



## CATASTROPHIC CLIMATE CRISIS

*Capitalism may collapse because it does not allow the market to tell the ecological truth.*

*Former Vice-President of Exxon Norway*

The solar energy hitting the Earth's surface in an hour is sufficient to run the global economy for a year. Lester Brown, a founding member of the World Watch Institute, describes wind power as key to backing us out of our reliance on coal. Wind farms can be brought on line in a year. He believes that wind can supplant the 40% of domestic electric power generation, currently dependent on coal, with wind energy by 2020.

In a handful of months preceding this Party's 2020 Convention, we have seen record temperatures in Antarctica, unprecedented shrinkage of the Arctic ice cap, an inferno of wildfires engulfing Australia. In recent years, we have witnessed wildfires ravaging California, a significant uptick of Category 5 Hurricanes pounding the Caribbean and the Gulf Coast, storm surges flooding Manhattan, dumping rains flooding communities deep inland in North Carolina, up and down the Mississippi River.

And yet still, too many public and private policy makers continue to deny and downplay the urgent warnings we have seen for decades, including recently the dire warnings by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, with its report: "Global Warming of 1.5° C". This report informs us that if we do not take immediate action to reduce human induced global warming to keep it below 1.5° C, our planet will suffer irreversible damage, and "even temporarily overshooting 1.5° C may have irreversible impacts on our natural systems, including biodiversity loss or pushing past various climate [tipping points](#)."<sup>1</sup>

The IPCC one-point-five-degree report advises us that we must take immediate action to remain below 1.5 °C global warming, which we are on pace to hit by 2030.

It has been estimated that the Pentagon consumes 2% of the domestic petroleum production. Barry Sanders, author of *The Green Zone: The Environmental Costs of Militarism*, "found that getting war casualty statistics out of the Department of Defense (DoD) is easier than getting fuel usage data." The Paris accords finally reversed the Kyoto Agreements exception to reporting GHG emissions for the US military, but not the exemption of including such usage in reduction targets. But of course our nation agreed to neither, and is therefore not bound by either. Based on publicly available and likely incomplete data, the Brown's Watson Institute recently estimated that in 2017, U.S. military operations were directly responsible for the emission of at least 59 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, but accounting for the industrial supply chain that number averages 153 million metric tons of carbon pollution annually, more than any except the 46 most fuel-hungry nations.

A tsunami swamping a reactor in Fukushima Japan has resulted in measurable fallout in Western North America and the irradiation of the Pacific Ocean. A meltdown at Chernobyl dropped fallout across Europe, irradiating that continent's food supply. Thirty-one first responders quickly succumbed to acute radiation poisoning. The surrounding red forest was bulldozed and buried in trenches. A massive concrete sarcophagus was built to contain the damaged reactor. A 1,000 square mile exclusion zone was designated. Local wildlife have

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<sup>1</sup> Ivanovich, Casey. Everything you need to know about climate tipping points. Environmental Defense Fund. 2017-Nov-1, <http://blogs.edf.org/climate411/2017/11/01/everything-you-need-to-know-about-climate-tipping-points/>

high concentrations of cesium-137 in their body tissue. In the United States, a malfunction inside the reactor at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania led to a release of radiative gases accumulating inside the containment dome. These incidents and a large number of near misses have shown for years that nuclear power is not a safe or clean option for the generation of electricity.

The Eisenhower Administration pushed forward with his Atoms for Peace program, with the nuclear industry promising power too cheap to meter. In doing so it ignored the 1952 Paley Commission Report which recommended against pursuit of nuclear energy and urged 'aggressive' investments for a solar / wind / biomass conversion.

Calculating the carbon footprint of nuclear power production requires an examination of (1) nuclear reactor construction and (2) reactor operation, (3) the energy used for mining ore, (4) the cost of refining reactor fuel from that ore, (5) dismantling a decommissioned reactor and (6) waste disposal. Waste disposal is likely the largest unknown as nearly seventy years in, we still have no agreement what that looks like, and the long-term nature of the commitment to dealing with spent fuels makes an accurate calculation most difficult. France seems to be the only nation willing to trust vitrification. In the US, most spent reactor fuel rods are still stored on-site in cooling ponds.

A pre-IPCC report of the UK's Committee on Climate Change recommended that to hit the targets it was then concerned with by 2030, that electric power generation should aim for a carbon footprint below 50 grams of carbon dioxide per kilowatt-hour. Large scale hydro costs roughly 10 gCO<sub>2</sub>, wind 34 gCO<sub>2</sub>, solar 50 gCO<sub>2</sub> (though those numbers are dropping fast with improving photo-voltaic efficiency). A recent literature review of three hundred papers on the carbon footprint of nuclear power found 19 with 'an acceptably rigorous scientific approach'. According to these 19 studies, the average carbon footprint for nuclear power is 66 gCO<sub>2</sub>/KwH. One paper put that figure as high as 200 gCO<sub>2</sub>.

Coal ash is a collective term for the waste material left over from coal-burning power plants. It contains hazardous materials such as arsenic, chromium, lead, radium, and mercury. US coal plants generate over 110 million tons of it every year. Even just short-term exposure to this material can have side effects. Long-term exposure can lead to a variety of cancers, heart problems and liver and kidney damage. It can cause brain damage in young or unborn children. There is no safe way to store it. Currently, most coal ash is mixed with water and stored in man-made ponds. These ponds often leak, contaminating groundwater and the surrounding area, or sometimes even break their banks, as seen in Tennessee in 2008 when the worst spill in history occurred. 1.5 million tons of coal ash was released when a dike on a storage pond broke, covering a 300-acre swath of land. As of 2019, 44 workers involved in the cleanup have died from the effects of coal ash and another 400 are sick or dying. Despite the threats coal ash poses to public health and the environment, the EPA has not classified coal ash as hazardous waste. In addition, the EPA under Trump recently proposed relaxing regulations on the containment of coal ash.

Hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking", is a process where energy companies drill deep into the earth to recover gas and oil from shale rock. After drilling, a pressurized stream of water, sand, and chemicals is injected to break apart the rock and release the gas or oil within the shale. In some wells, propane, butane and oil are used in place of water. In addition, acids are sometimes injected to dissolve the rock. This activity has led to an increase in earthquake activity near and around fracking sites. Fracking also uses massive quantities of water, sometimes as much as 9.6 million gallons per well, which could be especially detrimental in

areas that are already facing shortages of drinkable water. Fracking has been banned by a number of countries (e.g.- Ireland, France, Bulgaria, and Germany) as well as several US states, but these bans are often not extensive enough and still allow some fracking infrastructure to be built. Concerns have also been raised about the chemicals used in the fracking process and the impacts they have had on public health and the environment. Some of the chemicals used are considered proprietary information. However, some of the chemicals used are known and have been found in water wells near fracking sites. These chemicals include ethane, methane, chromium-6 and benzene. These proprietary chemicals should be made known for the protection of public health and environmental safety.

Invasive insect populations worldwide have been increasing with a rise in global temperatures. This has led to crop yields having been greatly damaged worldwide, leading to a worry that we will see an increase in famines and food shortages.

Communities worldwide have been witnessing the effects of rising sea levels, record high tides, an increase in seawater temperatures and the melting of the polar ice caps. Venice recently experienced the highest tides it has witnessed in fifty years. However, often it is the poor communities in low-lying coastal areas who are hardest hit by these changes. Rising seawater temperatures have also provided for an increase in the strength and frequency of hurricanes and typhoons. The burning of fossil fuels has also led to the increasing acidification of our oceans from the absorption of carbon dioxide into seawater. Coral reefs, sea urchins, clams, oysters, and other calcifying organisms in particular are dying out. It has been predicted that 90% of the world's coral reefs could die out by 2050 if changes are not made.

Climate change induced natural disasters including rising sea levels will instigate mass migrations of internally displaced climate refugees. Already Florida is showing a net loss of population. Puerto Rico still suffers two years out from the Hurricane damage from which the Trump administration failed to provide relief. As time goes by other Caribbean communities will be adversely impacted by the damage we have done to the stability of the climate. Our nation has a responsibility to provide relief for the damage our economic policies have unleashed on human populations around the world.

Net metering is when excess power generated by home power systems is fed back into the energy grid, often being purchased by the power company.

As Greens, we advocate policies to:

### ***1. Implement a Green New Deal***

We reject the co-opted, watered down version of the Green New Deal used by Democrats as a political football as far too little, far too late. We insist that the original Green New Deal, as articulated by Green Party candidates (most notably in Howie Hawkins Gubernatorial bid and later with Jill Stein's Presidential run) address the issue unencumbered by the denial of climate science. Stabilizing the climate will require bold policy leadership which aims to reduce the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere below 350 parts per million (ppm) which existed pre-1980. Just as we were able to restructure the national economy in a matter of months to meet the challenge of World War II, so must we proceed under a state of emergency to address catastrophic climate change with a similar sense of urgency. Georgia Greens embrace the outlines of such a program articulated in our national party's platform to "revive the economy and make wars for oil obsolete": creating 20 million jobs transitioning to

100% renewables by 2030, the implementation of a Just Transition providing full income and benefits to displaced workers, providing “public, community and worker ownership” over our energy systems, building a “nationwide smart electricity grid that can pool and store power from a diversity of renewable sources”, ending the subsidies of harmful technologies, phasing out legacy systems with a sense of urgency and leaving the carbon in the ground.

## ***2. Close foreign bases, end US imperialism, bring the troops home***

The US has nearly 800 military bases in over 70 countries worldwide. A Green Congress will close these bases, downsize considerably the scope of the mission and the number of servicemembers in uniform. We will shift the mission of our military to address the real security threats faced by our nation and the global community of nations. As we make the solar transition, wars for oil will be even more absurd than they are now.

## ***3. Rebuild the national grid***

An efficient power grid will require national coordination to knit together existing regional power grids. A diversity of large scale solar, solar thermal, wind and hydro, along with community and household based power generation systems can provide a stable power supply when tied together by a grid to distribute the power being generated to the power consumers in need.

## ***4. Leave fossil fuels in the ground***

Fossil fuels which are never mined never get burned and contribute nothing to the carbon footprint of human activities. We advocate an end to fuel extraction from tar sands, offshore drilling, uranium mining, coal mining/mountaintop removal, hydraulic fracturing (fracking), etc. We support an immediate ban on all new permits for fracking in all forms and the rapid phase-out of hydraulic fracturing operations previously permitted. We will hold the oil and gas industry financially responsible for all health, property, and environmental damages from fracking, including the resultant water contamination and earthquake damage. We will require the fracking industry to disclose all chemicals used in fracking fluids for the health impacts upon people in areas where fracking is used as well as the environmental impacts, particularly the industry’s impact on drinking water sources.

## ***5. Shut down the nuclear power industry***

Greens on the Public Service Commission and the state Assembly will collaborate to shut down the construction of all new nuclear power facilities in Georgia, working to ensure that the new reactors at Vogtle are never fueled and irradiated. Greens will quickly phase out reliance on and proceed urgently to decommission the two nuclear reactors at Plant Hatch and the four at Plant Vogtle. We will hold the Southern Company responsible for the safe storage of spent nuclear material from these facilities, giving particular attention to the threat of flooding in the Altamaha and Savannah River basins, and the threat such flooding would pose to the secure storage of these irradiated materials.

## ***6. Invest in solar, wind, small scale hydropower and geo-thermal energy***

As Greens roll back tax-payer subsidies to the fossil fuel and nuclear industries, we will shift subsidies to encourage the purchase and installation of solar panels, wind turbines, and other renewable energy sources, particularly to household and community scale installations. We will require power companies to provide for net metering of energy generated by these sources.

## ***7. Address the carbon footprint of our transportation system***

Georgia Greens will shift transportation investments from those subsidizing the privately owned and operated automobile to those encouraging the expansion of the public transportation infrastructure sufficient to provide convenient and reliable access to everyone, and which effectively compete on the basis of economic cost and convenience. With changes to city planning standards, we can retool cities as walkable, bikeable, livable communities serving human needs through proximity rather than mobility.

## ***8. Revise building codes, invest in energy efficiency, optimize solar gain***

By revising building codes, we can encourage cost effective investments for new construction in energy efficiency improvements and with roofs which are pitched and oriented to optimize solar gain, and pre-wired for future roof top wind and solar installations, vastly improving the efficiency of such installations and providing significant savings when household based generating capacity is later installed.

## ***9. Retrofit existing building stock for energy efficiency***

We will also use policy and financial incentives to encourage energy efficiency investments in our legacy homes, offices and industrial operations.

## ***10. Sequester carbon***

Georgia Green elected officials will create a Carbon Sequestration Division for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, charged with oversight of programs for reforesting the state and to incentivize private landowners to restore ecosystems on privately owned lands. The Georgia Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Service will be funded to encourage the widespread use of regenerative agricultural practices.

## ***11. Restructure agriculture to fulfill local nutritional needs, in sustainable ways***

Georgia Green elected officials will create an office in the Department of Community Affairs to assist municipal and county governments with the creation of an inventory of public and private lands suitable for the development of community gardens and the development of Community Supported Agriculture enterprises.

## ***12. Enhance emergency preparedness***

Elected Greens will mobilize public and private resources to effectively respond to growing frequency and intensity of natural disasters we experience with growing climate instability.

***13. Prepare to accommodate particularly internally displaced and Caribbean climate refugees***

Rising sea levels will displace coastal and island communities North of the fall line, and the Department of Community Affairs must be provided the staff, training and resources necessary to help both displaced communities and recipient communities plan for this disruption.

***14. Support Georgia's Coastal communities to prepare for rising sea levels***

A Green caucus in the state assembly will lead the way to use the Department of Community Affairs to assist communities in Georgia's five coastal counties, especially, but also communities throughout South Georgia, and below the Fall line to begin planning now for the impacts of rising sea levels, further salt water intrusion into groundwater aquifers, to mitigate the adverse impacts expected in the agricultural sector from rising temperatures and the diminishing availability of groundwater for irrigation, and other impacts of the catastrophic climate crisis.

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

*Create a criminal justice system that protects our communities, our tax revenues, the rights of the accused and the wages and working conditions of Georgia workers.*

Currently the state of Georgia is incarcerating an ever-increasing number of its citizens at great cost in both the tax money needed to operate the Prison system and in the human potential being wasted. Georgia has abandoned any intention to rehabilitate its inmates -- most of whom will one day return to our communities. The get-tough-on-crime policies of the status quo is making our communities less safe and promises to bankrupt the state's coffers and human potential.

Meanwhile critical threats to the safety of our communities are practically ignored by the criminal justice system. Our state lacks both the commitment and the infrastructure to address the ecological crimes of corporations and the very real and ever-present threat of violence in our homes.

Corporate boards and officers make decisions every day that result in the introduction of poisons to the air and water which we all share as our common heritage. These same acts committed by individuals would be considered and prosecuted as criminal. Corporations hide behind immunity and poison our communities and food supplies, killing our neighbors with impunity.

Half or more of the women and children of Georgia suffer physical abuse in their own homes. Assaults that would be considered criminal if they happened on the streets are shrouded and protected in a cloak of familial secrecy. Creating justice for women and children can not be done with police and the courts alone. But these institutions must play their role. We also need to recreate a culture where this sort of violence is not tolerated and where parents and spouses are supported in finding non-violent ways of resolving conflicts.

Georgia has become the focus of International attention for the human rights abuses that go on in the state's prison and juvenile detention centers every day.

### **1. *Create a Restorative Justice System***

Create a justice system that focuses on police accountability, public safety, rehabilitation and re-integration into the community and court and judicial accountability (which includes: speedy trial, the rights of the accused, the rights of prisoner, the rights of ex-offenders and the rights of victims). The criminal justice system must be equally fair and accessible to all people, regardless of wealth. To that end, every person accused of a crime should be offered competent, adequately funded legal counsel at all stages of the proceedings. We urge the repeal of the mandatory minimum sentencing laws adopted at the state and federal levels which serve to bind the hands of Judges.

### **2. *Non-Violent Juvenile Offender Sentencing Reform***

No youth accused or convicted of a non-violent crime shall be incarcerated. Communities, courts, local and state government should fund alternatives to incarceration and the elements of a restorative justice system.

### **3. *Declare Peace in the War on Drugs***

Police officers do and sell drugs from confiscation rooms. The DEA and CIA make millions on drug laundering, sales and use. Corruption exists in all levels of drug enforcement. The Drug War is a waste of money and a counterproductive policy. In the interest of ending coppuption in law enforcement, saving tax dollars and maintaining non-violent offenders as contributing members of our communities, we urge that the state offer treatment for

addictions instead of a war on drugs. Replace a criminal justice response to substance abuse with treatment and addiction counseling. Focus on shifting resources away from the prosecution of victimless crimes. We advocate that simple misdemeanor possession of marijuana be decriminalized and that we stop incarcerating our citizens for this offense or using this, unsupported by other evidence, as a basis for a finding of deprivation. We advocate the repeal of all mandatory minimum sentences for simple drug possession. We will correct the sentencing disparities between crack and powder cocaine that have resulted in the disproportionate incarceration of African-Americans in Georgia and across the country. We will extend amnesty to any offender who was previously sentenced in a manner inconsistent with these sentencing parameters.

4. ***Protect the Rights of the Accused.***

*Fully fund indigent defense and roll back the 1999 increase in jail bonding fees.*

5. ***Rehabilitate Inmates, Protect their Families from Exploitation***

Reclaim public resources from the prison industry for reinvestment in prevention. Make rehabilitation the purpose of incarceration. Respect for the humanity of all inmates must be the foundation of incarceration. We will redirect public resources from incarceration to fund drug rehabilitation programs available to all regardless of income or offender status. We will prohibit the price gouging by collect call telephone service providers under contract with the Georgia Department of Corrections which is exploiting the families of inmates. We must encourage, not discourage, communication between inmates and their families as part of preparing the way for their re-integration into our communities.

6. ***Protect Workers from Slavery***

Prohibit private prisons from using inmate labor that would leave Georgians working in unsafe conditions for declining wages in competition with unpaid, inmate slave labor. Amend the XIII<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Article I. The Bill of Rights, Section I. The Rights of Persons, Paragraph XXII. Involuntary Servitude of the Constitution of the State of Georgia, in each case, to repeal the exception to the Constitutional prohibition against slavery and involuntary servitude.

7. ***Prevent Domestic Violence***

Increase resources to prevent and respond to domestic violence. Commit funding, resources and personnel to build a coordinated community based response to domestic violence in our homes, that emphasizes the accountability of the perpetrator and the protection of those victimized by abuse. Implement the recommendations of the *Commission on Gender Bias in the Judicial System* in their June 1992 Report to the Supreme Court of Georgia. Train police and court personnel to do their part to end domestic violence. We urge Greens and Georgians to challenge the sexist assumptions of our culture which are used to justify family violence.

8. ***Prosecute Environmental Crime***

Increase resources to respond to crimes against ecological integrity. We oppose immunity for corporate officers from liability for criminal acts of their corporations.

9. ***Prohibit State-Sanctioned Murder***

The Death Penalty is barbaric, archaic, and morally reprehensible. Capital punishment is imposed in classist, racist and freakish manner. The death penalty has no place in a world moving into the next millennium.



**10. *Provide Reparations to the Victims of the Department of Corrections Under Commissioner Wayne Garner***

Under Governor Zell Miller in the 1990s, the Georgia Department of Corrections, headed by Commissioner Wayne Garner, rejected a philosophy of rehabilitation and implemented a policy of punishment. Survivors of the human rights abuses during this time and their descendants deserve restitution. The architects of these policies should be removed from office, their crimes should be publicized and, where appropriate, criminal charges should be filed.

**11. *Free Jamil Al-Amin***

Jamil Al-Amin, resident imam for the West End Community Masjid in Atlanta Georgia, formerly known as H. Rap Brown, was convicted in 2002 of a murder he did not commit and for which another has confessed under oath on three occasions. We condemn the Clinton era reforms to Federal Habeas appeals which tied the hands of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals which acknowledged prosecutorial misconduct but were constrained from offering a remedy. We urge the Federal Department of Justice to return him to the custody of the Georgia Department of Prisons to which the court sentenced him, to facilitate visitation by his family, congregation and friends. We urge that the Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles grant Jamil Al-Amin clemency to remove him immediately from the harm and threat to his health and life posed by his imprisonment and efforts by the state to execute him through medical neglect. We urge the Fulton County District Attorney Conviction Integrity Unit to call for the conviction to be vacated and/or a retrial to be conducted. It is past time to reunite Imam Jamil with his family and to return him to the community to which he has devoted his life in service.

# DEMOCRACY

*Create a government of, by and for the people.*

Despite the rhetoric of high school civics classes, we don't live in a democracy but in a corporate oligarchy where public policy is made at the behest of and to benefit wealthy business interests. This has cost us more than just democracy and the right to meaningfully participate in the governance of our own communities. It has also cost us access to clean air, water, soil and food. It has cost us the common wealth of mature forests and unpolluted oceans. It has cost us our ability to offer our children a future that serves their best interests.

Incumbents through the reapportionment process have more influence over who wins an election than do voters. Corporate lobbyists and wealthy campaign contributors have more influence over the direction of public policy than do the citizens and tax-payers of Georgia. And now the Georgia Assembly, following the lead of Secretary of State Cox, has spent millions in tax payer dollars on new electronic voting machines which operate on proprietary software, protected from voter inspection by trade secret laws and which afford no method for recounting ballots, inspected by voters to confirm that their intention has been appropriately recorded.

When individuals in corporations or government at any level commit wrong, they often conceal information which could motivate demands for accountability. Without this accountability, public trust is diminished. A vital aspect of democracy is fostering an environment where whistleblowers, individuals with knowledge of these wrongs, will inform authorities and the public.

None of the reforms in this chapter can be a substitute for the more radical changes necessary to place control in the hands of the masses of people. Specifically, the United States must replace empire and militarism with cooperation among the peoples of the world and capitalism with the community-based economics advocated by our party before democracy can truly flourish.

## ***1. Eliminate Barriers to Voting***

All citizens have the right to participate freely and equally in an electoral system free of onerous barriers to voter registration which protects the principle of one-person/ one-vote and which is designed to ensure public trust and the integrity of the results. We advocate that the new electronic voting machines implemented during the 2002 election cycle be retrofitted with printers to provide for a voter-inspected paper trail, which will be collected and tabulated to confirm the validity of preliminary results generated electronically. We insist that the election machinery be driven by open source and peer reviewed software, open to inspection by any voter.

## ***2. Democratically Finance Elections***

We must provide public financing of election campaigns so that a candidate's meaningful access to the electoral system is not determined by money; and where candidate viability is determined by their appeal to the electorate not their appeal to wealthy contributors. Prohibit the use of private money in public elections.

## ***3. Ensure Open Access to the Ballot***

Open up ballot access to independent political parties. If the right to vote is to mean anything, a voter's candidate of choice must have access to the ballot and their votes must be counted.

4. ***Proportional Representation***

Georgia's elections laws provide for a system of winner-take-all, majority election rules. The right to govern belongs to the majority. But the right of representation belongs to everyone. As Greens, we advocate the use of proportional representation rules in the counting of ballots. These will allow voters to vote their convictions instead of their fears. We propose that the Electoral College, the Georgia Congressional delegation, the state House and local Councils and Commissions be elected by a system of multi-member proportional representation and that single member races be filled by single transferable voting or preference voting.

5. ***Provide for Recall, Initiative and Referendum***

Provide for a meaningful recall procedure to challenge and hold accountable sitting elected officials. Provide reasonable means to access the ballot for voter initiatives to set policies that elected officials ignore or refuse to enact. Protect the right to referendum.

6. ***Stop Privatization***

Protect democratic control over government services by halting the trend to privatize public functions without community referendum. Ensure that workers providing government services receive a livable wage for their work.

7. ***Ensure Sunshine in Public Policy***

Maximize sunshine and open meetings in all policy making.

8. ***Expand Democratic Control of our Communities***

Expand Democratic Community Control of our communities, land-use, economic development, transportation planning, housing, schools, public safety, utilities and local media.

9. ***Hold Corporations Accountable***

Eliminate corporate influence and interference in the community development decision-making process. Establish and enforce strict regulations that prohibit real estate and banking policies and practices that are hostile to the interests of the community. Establish a Corporate Charter Review Commission to consider challenges to a Corporation's Charter to operate in Georgia. Provide that a Corporate Charter may be revoked on a finding that a preponderance of the evidence shows that the activities of the Corporation willfully or recklessly threatens the health and welfare of the people of Georgia.

10. ***We Oppose the Faith-Based Initiative***

We oppose the Faith-Based Initiative because by piercing the wall of separation between church and state, this initiative threatens the integrity and independence of churches, while simultaneously funneling public tax dollars through religious institutions, therefore coloring the fulfillment of public priorities through a religious lens, in violation of the First Amendment Establishment Clause.

11. ***Protect Whistleblowers***

The Federal and Georgia legislatures should pass measures which forbid common retaliation tactics against whistleblowers which pass as legitimate personnel actions. Intelligence and military agencies should create an independent means of due process relief for their whistleblowers who claim to have experienced retaliation. To receive relief, whistleblowers should only have to meet a fair burden of proof standard, not higher standards. Congress should afford federal whistleblowers the right to have their retaliation

claims decided by a jury of their peers. Congress should add enforcement mechanisms to the Lloyd-La Follette Act to provide relief for whistleblowers who disclose directly to Congress. Congress should establish intra-agency policy dissent channels so employees can safely express dissent about agency policy decisions. Congress should extend whistleblower protections to staff of the judicial and legislative branches of government.

By executive action, the president should (1) require agency heads to provide a detailed explanation when they decline to meaningfully discipline agency supervisors who broke the law by retaliating against whistleblowers; (2) restore full operation of the Merit Systems Protection Board; (3) rescind the Granston memo, which expanded the authority of Department of Justice attorneys to seek the dismissal of *qui tam* lawsuits, that is lawsuits by private individuals against companies which defraud the government. In addition, our party urges that the President send a strong message of support to whistleblowers by (1) canceling the request to the United Kingdom to extradite Julian Assange and to direct the Department of Justice to drop its charges against him which seek to criminalize acts of journalism; (2) a full pardon for Chelsea Manning, including compensation for unjust imprisonment, particularly for Contempt of Court for refusing to testify against Assange in a grand jury; (3) a pardon for Edward Snowden and a celebration of his revelations of wrongdoing by the United States government; and (4) commutation of the sentence of Reality Winner, whose lengthy prison sentence was meant to deter others from revealing classified information, regardless of its value to the public.

## **ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY**

*Create an economy that recognizes the abundance of the planet and the right of all to share in that abundance.*

Political democracy without economic democracy is meaningless.

Our economy is organized around a scarcity mentality which protects the profit and greed of an owning class while impoverishing a working class. For too long, public policy has been written by corporations, for corporations, and at the expense of working people and consumers.

Georgia and U.S. taxpayers subsidize corporations when we provide public assistance to support the families of people employed at substandard wages, benefits and working conditions. Georgia leads the country in infant mortality. Hungry children don't learn. Poverty creates hopelessness and disempowerment that leaves people turning to criminal activities to support their families.

The Berlin Wall was toppled over a decade ago, yet a barrier to freedom erected in 1947 as an extension of the Cold War still exists here in this country, The Taft-Hartley Act. Architects of this legislation viewed the defeat of organized labor domestically as part of the war against global communism. Organized labor has historically won wage, safety and benefits victories for workers, and this and other laws limiting labor from effectively organizing conflict with constitutionally guaranteed rights to freely organize and associate, and unfairly compromises worker's safety and quality of life in Georgia and other so-called 'right to work' states.

### **1. Honor Economic Human Rights**

Honor everyone's right to decent and affordable housing, health care, food, retirement benefits, education and childcare. This is guaranteed by the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and ought to be enforced by the state of Georgia.

### **2. Repeal Punitive Workfare**

We recognize that children are entitled to housing, food, healthcare, education, and the care of their parents. We oppose those aspects of Workfare which we feel violate the Constitutional prohibition against *involuntary servitude* and the punitive sanctions created by the 1996 Congressional welfare reform act and the 1997 Georgia Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Act. We commit to restructuring the public welfare program so that children have the benefit of their parent's time and energy; and that respects the autonomy of single parents.

### **3. Repeal the Taft-Hartley Act, Guarantee Livable Wages and the Right to Organize**

Guarantee the right to a safe, secure job at a livable wage, with protection of the right to organize, to bargain collectively, to join a union and to strike without fear of retaliation, reprisal or firing. Prohibit companies from busting unions and attacking living standards through the use of scab replacement workers, prison labor, economic blackmail, taking reprisals against whistle-blowers or the payment of unlivable wages to their workers. We call for the immediate repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act and related legislation that prey on workers, their families and communities, embrace corporate profit over peoples needs, and expand the widening gulf between classes in this nation. We endorse the Universal Living Wage Campaign to create a national standard for a community specific Living Wage tied to Fair Market Rents (as computed by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development), which will cap rent and utility costs at 30% of a person's gross income. No

person working a full time job should be denied access for themselves and their families to basic housing. Ensure due process, including the right to notice and representation in wage garnishment actions. Protect workers from garnishment actions that do not stem from a child support action.

4. ***Guarantee a Community's Right to Know***

A Community has the right to know about a company's plans for downsizing, closing shop or moving out of the community; the right to know about a company's toxic emissions and workplace conditions; and the right to act to stop a company from pursuing policies and practices that are hostile to the interests of the community.

5. ***Repeal NAFTA and GATT***

We call for the repeal of NAFTA and GATT. We support the Steelworker's Constitutional challenge of NAFTA's ratification process. We acknowledge that the economy is linked on a global scale, but the free trade agenda has created hardship for workers both here (where jobs have been lost) and abroad (where wages are so low that workers cannot support their families). We oppose the power granted to the World Trade Organization by the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs allowing them to overturn laws agreed to in a democratic manner by local communities, state and national governments. Corporate challenges before the WTO of worker and environmental protection laws as an "unfair restraint of trade" have already overturned US Congressional laws to protect Marine Mammals and protected Nike's use of child labor paid 9¢ an hour for 14 hour days. We're committed to building an economy that is community based, sustainable and just. The Free Trade agenda has created increased dependence for Georgia's workers, on the farms and in the factories. It has accelerated the loss of family farms and increased reliance on chemically addicted factory farming. We are committed to building a Fair Trade Economy with our global neighbors based on respect for the rights of all working people to the economic rights and the environmental rights elaborated in this Platform.

6. ***Protect the Indigenous Worldview from the Free Trade Agenda***

We endorse the Indigenous People's Seattle Declaration adopted on December 1, 1999 on the occasion of the Third Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle Washington. We oppose the Agreement on Agriculture which has encouraged export competition and import liberalization destroying ecologically rational and sustainable agricultural practices that have formed the basis for the food security of Indigenous Peoples around the world. We call for the repeal of the provisions of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIPS) which permit the patenting of life forms and have given rise to bio-prospecting projects to colonize indigenous cultural and biogenetic resources. We urge that scientific researchers and corporations be prohibited from appropriating and patenting indigenous seeds, medicinal plants, and related knowledge about these life-forms. The principles of prior informed consent and right of veto by Indigenous Peoples must be respected. We oppose the General Agreement of Services (GATS), with its focus on liberalizing investment rules and privatization of the service sector.

7. ***Arts Funding***

We recognize the importance of public funding for the arts, public access television and radio and public broadcasting. Our ownership of the public airwaves is meaningless unless people have the resources to access those airwaves and set the priorities for programming.

### **8. *A Path to Citizenship, Compassionate Policy toward Immigrant Workers and Families***

The Georgia Green Party advocates policies which recognize the role of corporate global trade policies in creating a growing humanitarian crisis which drives so much immigration, particularly by the undocumented. We advocate policies which will protect immigrant workers, including their right to unify with their families; and which will provide a reasonable path to citizenship, including to those currently in the country without documents. We urge that 'matricula consular' be recognized as a suitable substitute for social security numbers for payroll purposes and American employers be entitled to hire immigrants from border (including Caribbean) nations as well as work-permitted immigrants from other nations. We support the full access of immigrant workers and their families to the public educational system, to access driver's licenses, to own property, open bank accounts and to enter into binding contracts. We would guarantee the freedom to travel, including the freedom to enter and re-enter the country. We would end the carnage of illegal border crossings, the exploitation of immigrant workers and the pitting of citizens against guest workers in a race to the bottom with respect to wages and working conditions.

### **9. *Requiring Georgia Employers to Establish Labor-Friendly Parental Leave Policies***

We support a requirement that employers in Georgia establish parental leave policies guaranteeing flexible hours and providing non-lapsing parental leave to be used at an employee's discretion for the fulfillment of their parental responsibilities, for each waged or salaried employed parent, when by birth, adoption or foster placement they assume responsibility for the custody of a child. We would index the length of such paid parental leave on the size of the employers' workforce, with those employing 1,000 or more full time equivalent employees required to fund six months paid leave for each qualifying parent, and those employing at least twenty full-time equivalent employees required to fund at least one month of such leave. Additionally, such policies should provide to birthing mothers eight weeks of paid leave as may be recommended by a health care provider for the pre-natal and post-partum health needs of mother and child.

### **10. *Stop External Governments and Corporations from Plundering of Resources of Other Nations and States***

Governments and corporations exploit resources located within the borders of other nations and states. All companies should be required by law to take steps to identify, address and prevent human rights abuses and exploitation of resources in the absence of an internationally recognized sovereign government's permission (known as due diligence). Companies and other governments/nations, their officers and their significant shareholders must be held to account for abuses. People whose rights have been abused by companies and whose resources have been consumed must be able to access justice and effective and timely remedy. Since companies operate across borders, so must legal accountability operate across borders to protect people's rights to an economically and environmentally sustainable standard of living. Companies who import into the United States products whose supply chains violate these laws should be fined and sanctioned in a manner sufficient to deter similar operations, including dilution of corporate control, and remedy to the victimized populations should be drawn from fines and/or distribution of corporate shares. Appropriate criminal charges should be brought against the officers, directors and shareholders or bondholders who hold 1% or more of these companies.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Local self-reliance is the key to economic security*

We understand that economic democracy is a human right. We also know it will not be granted to us by the Corporations who benefit from the current economic insecurity. We intend to Re-Create the economy from the community out to foster sustainable practices, humane working conditions and lives of abundance.

As Greens we recommend:

### **1. Local currencies**

Local governments and non-governmental organizations can create new currencies issued by them to workers and vendors who commit to accept the currency. Local currencies recycle wealth in the community and multiply job creation opportunities. Time Dollars, LETS and Hours systems of local currency encourage livable wages and build a community base for widespread economic security.

### **2. Broad-based Ownership**

We favor policies including purchasing and contracting preferences that award and encourage companies that share meaningful ownership with their workers and community. This ownership would include participation in both the profits and in shareholder decision-making. We urge state accounts and annuities be invested in business enterprises which foster and create broad-based ownership, an equitable distribution of wealth and income and the principles of economic democracy.

### **3. Creating Accurate Measures**

We urge state legislation to give preference in state economic development grant making to local governments which participate in programs to measure and report relevant economic data to the public. These measures would include data on human and community needs (especially energy and food) either unmet or filled with imports which could be provided for locally.

### **4. Public Support for Lifelong Education**

An investment in lifelong education universally available will reap dividends in a culture of learning for our children and facilitate the ongoing development of the people—who are the most important resource of our economy.

### **5. Energy self-reliance**

The Public Service Commission can require that new investments by power utilities be made in energy conservation and new renewable generating capacity, especially photovoltaic and wind. Plugging the leaks in our energy budget saves our money for local spending and local job creation.

### **6. Zoning for Home-based Businesses**

We urge local governments to amend their zoning codes to encourage mix-used development and home-based businesses.



## EDUCATION

*Each and every person can attain whatever educational level they desire in whatever manner they desire regardless of income, race, disability or gender without discrimination.*

An education should never be denied to anyone with a thirst for knowledge. For too long education has been a privilege. The right to a good education should be protected for all peoples, the benefits accruing to our nation as a whole and it should be financed by public funds.

Georgia Greens recognize the limits of direct democracy models in our complex culture. Nonetheless we believe that a republican form of governance works best when all citizens are informed and educated to engage effectively in the democratic process. That process continues to operate long after the polls have closed and the election results have been certified.

As Greens, we will:

### **1. *End Tracking***

Stop tracking, compartmentalization and ability-grouping in schools. These programs with the stated intent of giving each child the attention they need to achieve their own level of educational development have been used to reinforce stereotypes of who is capable of what in an educational environment. Young people are capable of far more than we give them credit for.

### **2. *Tax Money Should Fund Open, Inclusive and Democratic Education***

Oppose school vouchers. Public funding must serve public schooling. Public resources must fund schools that provide open, inclusive and democratic access to all students who wish to attend.

### **3. *Protect our young from manipulative recruiting practices.***

We are committed to a future without war. We expect our schools to prepare young people for meaningful employment in a peace economy. We oppose JROTC militaristic programs and their role as training camp for the armed services. If military recruiters are invited to schools, promoters of peace and non-violence should also be invited to offer young people viable alternatives to enlistment. We oppose the practice of public schools providing lists of the student body to military recruiters.

### **4. *Community Classrooms***

Our community can play a dynamic role in educating young people in practical living skills. We encourage students to get out from behind their desks and to find teachers and mentors among their community as part of an organized volunteer program funded by state and local school boards. Students can find skills such as gardening, cooking, construction (carpentry, electrical and plumbing), sewing, writing, music, art, auto mechanics, etc. Senior citizens and young people need opportunities to get to know one another again. By sharing on a practical level we can all benefit and gain a greater understanding for each other.

### **5. *Stop Ritalin Abuse***

Investigate the incidence of children being diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder and other learning disabilities in Georgia's classrooms. A significant number of students in our

schools are taking Ritalin and other pharmaceuticals to help control the student's behavior. We believe that children should be treated with respect, including the respect for the benefit for physical activity as opposed to sitting still for extended periods of time. Pharmaceuticals should not be used by our educators as discipline or a teaching tool. All medical decisions involving children should be private to the parent, child and a medical doctor of their choosing. Should circumstances warrant the sharing of student's medical information with educators, this should only happen as part of an Individualized education Plan.

**6. *Schools Can Help Us Unlearn Racism***

Teach children the truth, compassion and diversity in our classrooms. Children deserve to know the true history of labor, religion and politics from a variety of valid perspectives. History has traditionally been written by the "winners." If we don't go back and re-examine the propaganda promoted about those "victories," we'll never be able to peel away the layers of racism and other cultural differences which continue to impact our communities as divisions instead of bridges.

**7. *Education Can Reduce Unwanted Pregnancies and Improve Health***

Offer accurate, age-appropriate sex and health education which will 1) teach an understanding of the practical biological processes, 2) teach an appreciation of the responsibilities of parenthood, 3) encourage self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth among young women, 4) teach an understanding of communicable diseases and the prevention thereof, 5) teach and promote good health through food consumption and physical activity, and 6) teach young people to respect each other's choices, take responsibility for preventing unwanted conception, and for raising and supporting any children.

**8. *Our Youth Need Recreation Opportunities***

Expand public recreational services for our youth.

**9. *Stop Short-Changing High School Athletes***

High Schools must stop valuing athletics over academics. The purpose of the public educational system is to prepare students for their future. Athletics programs serve a role, but should not replace academic preparation. When an Athletic Program leaves the student unprepared for either higher education or employment that can effectively support them and their families, the school has failed both the student and the community.

**10. *Thorough Nutrition Education in Public Schools***

Georgians suffer greatly from an inordinate amount of heart disease, strokes and cancer. There is sufficient evidence in the medical community to advise the public that these and other debilitating and fatal diseases are preventable through diet changes as advocated by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (P.O. Box 6322, Washington, D.C., 20015). Our economy is burdened by disease care costs that are a direct consequence of the meat, egg and dairy diet. Our landscape has been denuded for grazing and our water systems are degraded by fecal pollutants which runoff our farms or are discharged from rendering plants. We urge the State School Board to provide nutrition which includes options that follow a Food Guide based on the recommendations of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. We urge that schools provide options and educate our youth about this Food Guide recommending four vegetarian food groups, i.e. (1) vegetables, (2) whole grains, (3) fruits and (4) legumes – with other items (e.g. meat, dairy, eggs, sweets, fats) discussed including the potential health consequences of the various food options.

*11. **Academic Rights***

We advocate that teachers, like all workers exercise their right to organize on the job site. We support the right of collective bargaining for teachers and other public employees. Teachers like all working people deserve the right to collective bargaining and protections from unreasonable termination. We believe that the quality of our children's education is dependent on promoting the rights of academic freedom residing with the individual teachers as opposed to school systems, boards and administrators

*12. **Student Rights***

We will establish independent student advocates in each school to speak on behalf of students, especially in disciplinary cases. We will ensure that students have reasonable due-process protections in school disciplinary actions. We call for the end of mandatory silent lunches for students. We call for the end of dress codes as they are unconstitutional and deny students freedom of expression and individuality.

*13. **Gateway Testing***

Gateway testing is not an accurate means of determining the achievement or intelligence of our children. We encourage our educators and will promote the use of a variety of evaluative tools which account for ethnic and cultural differences. We oppose proposals to hold back students based on the score of one test. This practice can cause irreparable damage and do not provide an accurate and effective means of determining a child's educational progress. As children are unique individuals and differ in these regards, the testing of children should take into account these differences in a fair and balanced manner.

*14. **Teach Nonviolent Communication Skills***

Our nation and our state have witnessed the increasing violence and all responsible and caring people want violence in our schools to stop. Unfortunately, in a world of sound bite culture, two working parent families, single working parent families, the delivery of communication skills that involve open and honest dialogue from the heart in a peaceful fashion falls by the wayside. Our current teaching of dispute resolution provides a band-aid once the dispute has arisen, but does not teach our children the necessary communication skills to interact in a more caring manner and obviate the occurrence of the dispute in the first place. One recommended model would be based on Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication.

*15. **Oppose Deal's Opportunity School District***

The Green Party opposes efforts to privatize and remove from community control public schools, even when such efforts are promoted under the guise of 'intervening in chronically failing public schools'. We oppose post-Katrina New Orleans inspired efforts to charter-ize and destroy public schools which when adequately supported, promise to provide equitably and publicly funded, democratically and locally governed educational institutions that prepare all Georgia students to exercise compassionate and critical decision making with civic virtue. We will protect this important legacy left to us by the Reconstruction General Assembly, and ensure that public schools serve to educate, rather than indoctrinate; serve their students rather than corporate profit. Specifically, we oppose the proposed Constitutional Amendment scheduled for inclusion on the 2016 General Election ballot as the 'Georgia State Intervention in Failing Public Schools Amendment' (SR-287 and SB-133).

**16. High School Graduation Requirements; Require Civic Engagement**

We urge that high school graduation requirements be revised to require that for a semester of the civics curriculum students be required on a monthly basis to attend and observe at least one meeting or hearing of a deliberative body or committee governing a civic organization or a public agency or government; and to make an oral and written report to their Civics class on what they learned from the experience. To accommodate the scheduling and transportation challenges associated with civic engagement, we urge that allowances be made for observing such hearings or meetings virtually. We urge that civics faculty in our schools consider the resources made available by iCivics to provide classroom preparation for students' engagement with any community organization as well as their local, state and federal governments.

## **ELECTRIC RE-REGULATION**

*Re-regulation of public utilities done in a way that protects consumers and small businesses and promotes the use of clean and safe renewable power sources.*

The re-regulation of public utilities, especially of the electric power utilities, is going to happen. Several states have made these changes and others including Georgia are studying these changes. The President of the United States has repeatedly espoused this as one way to reduce our CO2 emissions to meet our commitments to the rest of the world.

It is essential that Georgia re-regulate in a manner that is good for the economy and good for the environment.

### **1. Demand Side Investments**

Use the rate setting and regulatory powers of the Public Service Commission to encourage investment in demand side efficiency and conservation improvements over investments in new generating capacity.

### **2. Protect (Especially Residential) Ratepayers**

Keep discriminatory practices out of electric service so that all consumers are guaranteed access to reliable electric service. Low income and rural communities must be offered programs in support of affordable electric service. Large consumers should not be given lower rates. Ratepayers must be protected from excessive rates during transition to a competitive market and protected from discrimination in rates or services in the long term.

### **3. Electric Reregulation Must Not Sacrifice the Environment**

Public protection from environmental damages caused by power generators and facilities. Pollution from power plants must be reduced. Energy conservation must be increased and cleaner energy supplies must be developed to move our society towards a sustainable existence. All competitors must be required to meet safety standards for workers and for the community. Public oversight for electric utilities must be maintained. Consumers should be given full disclosure of emissions and waste data, compliance with safety laws and all other information necessary to make informed purchasing decisions.

### **4. Net Metering: Funding the Transition to a Solar Economy**

We support legislation offering incentives to small (less than 10 kilowatts) independent power producers, using clean renewable energy sources such as photovoltaics, wind generators, and bio-mass generators. These incentives should include tax credits, rebates on equipment cost, and "net metering", also known as bi-directional metering, ie. the electricity meter moves forward for incoming power from the utility company, backwards for outgoing power produced by the independent power producer in excess of their needs, thus providing equitable compensation.

### **5. Separate Power Distribution from Production**

Electric restructuring done in ways that lead to a truly competitive market. It is essential that the power grid and the means of distribution be run by an organization that does not compete in the production of power. The power grid must allow a level playing field for all producers. This means that if the Southern Company's power grid is used, then it must divest itself of all power production for the state of Georgia or sell the grid to a truly independent organization.

**6. *Protect Ratepayers and Taxpayers from Stranded Costs***

Taxpayers and ratepayers should not assume responsibility for losses from bad investments made by utility companies. Utility company stockholders or municipalities are not entitled to recover losses from bad investments from electric consumers or taxpayers.

**7. *Shut Down Nuclear Power Plants***

No nuclear power plants will be allowed in Georgia. No power plants that are inefficient from an environmental point of view will be allowed. Before any new large capacity is provided it must be demonstrated that extensive demand side management has occurred. Investments in consumer efficiency are the most cost-effective manner of serving our power needs.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

*Honor the rights of all to clean air, water, soil and food.*

Our economy's production processes were developed without sufficient attention to the hazardous side effects they present. Toxic substances are accumulating in the food chain. Our current economy is built on the principles of consumption and waste, not sustainability and conservation of vital natural resources.

The causes of death in the United States have shifted from infectious diseases, in the early part of the century, to 80% of deaths now resulting from chronic conditions. The cost of this trend is measured in shortened and diminished lives, as well as \$750 billion a year in increased medical expenses. Even so, our vital records are not being collected in ways which would facilitate the scientific correlation of all this illness and disability with environmental factors, which are believed to be major causes.

The fallout of these corporate choices for toxic technologies fall disproportionately on poor communities and communities of color. While urban dwellers are able to purchase products of convenience, in Georgia, it is primarily poor, African-American and rural communities who pay the health costs of toxic exposure. Workers are the first exposed. But the often short-sighted policies designed to protect workplace safety tend to shift the pollution into the communities or to down-stream neighbors.

Ultimately, we all pay the price since we all share the air and water which cycles throughout the environment.

### **1. *Phase Out Toxic Technologies***

Phase out toxic technologies such as nuclear power plants, the automobile, waste incinerators and landfills. We will fight to stop the transportation of trans-uranic and radioactive wastes and to require the U.S. Department of Energy Weapons Complex, the commercial power reactors and the academic research reactors to develop plans for the long term storage and containment of existing radioactive wastes on the site at which these wastes were produced.

### **2. *Shift Funding to Alternatives to Cars***

Shift transportation investment from car-oriented road construction to projects and programs that serve pedestrians, cyclists, public transit users, the elderly and the differently-abled.

### **3. *Prevent Pollution***

Shift environmental policy from pollution control (which hasn't worked to protect human health or to conserve non-renewable resources) to pollution prevention - - not producing toxics in the first place. We support the establishment of a Zero-Waste Goal for the State of Georgia. We advocate a comprehensive program of education and other measures aimed at industrial, institutional, office, household and consumers generators of waste to reduce both the toxicity and the quantity of waste they produce. We urge container deposit legislation and other economic incentives and disincentives to promote the re-use of both products and materials. We urge the creation of household, community, municipal and agricultural composting programs to divert clean organics from disposal from household kitchens and yards, from institutional kitchens and from agricultural waste generators to both reduce the load on waste disposal systems and to build soil. We call for segregating industrial discharges from municipal sewage systems in order to protect the usefulness of these wastes for composting and non-food agricultural uses. We support bans of compostable materials from disposal facilities. We urge the development and public funding of programs for

segregating and gathering used materials for recycling. We support an ongoing survey of the waste stream destined for disposal to determine the potential for additional waste and toxic reduction, products re-use, organic composting and materials recycling. Whenever possible, utilize waste energy from one process to run another process, thereby saving the burning of additional fuel. This is called 'cogeneration' and should be applied as widely as possible to reduce fuel and energy consumption and pollution.

#### **4. *Compensate Victims of Pollution***

Protect the rights of victims of environmental pollution to receive full compensation for damages and quality health care. Create a Pollution Victim's Compensation Fund to receive dedicated revenue from a Pollution tax on all releases reportable in the Toxic Release Inventory. The Fund is to be divided into separate accounts and disbursed to pay a) the health-care costs of Pollution Victims; b) providing technical assistance to community groups in holding responsible corporations accountable for containing and cleaning up uncontrolled toxic sites; c) funding grants for technical assistance by the Office of Pollution Prevention to be matched by and to assist polluting industries to retool production processes to reduce reportable discharges; and d) for retraining, job placement and worker transition costs associated with displacement created by production process changes motivated by pollution prevention efforts. In addition, we advocate the creation of national and state Chronic Disease Registries to facilitate the systematic gathering and correlation of data on chronic diseases (including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, lupus, birth defects, asthma, and so on).

#### **5. *Protect our Water Resources***

We believe that the provision of a secure source for clean, potable water is one of the primary roles of governments. We recognize that many communities in Georgia can no longer offer uncontaminated water to their citizens. We insist that poor people be provided with uncontaminated bottled water. We oppose the privatization of public water and wastewater systems. We believe that responsibility for protecting our water resources is the most fundamental role of our governments and recognize this as a public function necessary to the security and the promotion of general welfare of Georgia's citizens. We are deeply concerned with the threats to our water security posed by surface and ground water contamination from agricultural, industrial, sedimentation and non-point run-off sources and by the depletion of the Floridian (and other) aquifers. We advocate that the issuance or renewal of surface or aquifer withdrawal permits for industrial use be conditioned on the existence of water conservation programs and on-site water recycling programs. We would condition the renewal of public withdrawal permits on educational and other programs including the Georgia Friendly Yard and Neighborhood Program to promote the conservation of water, the use of indigenous vegetation, water efficient irrigation and efficiency standards for household, institutional, commercial and industrial water appliances and processes. We urge the prompt separation of septic sewage lines from storm water lines to protect from the accidental discharge of untreated sewage into our streams and rivers. We support the use of sewer tap-on moratoriums in those drainage basins which lack the capacity to safely handle the existing and anticipated load on waste water systems. To insure the protection of ground water resources, we urge counties and municipal governments to provide for special use permits to encourage the experimental use and development of onsite composting toilets in the place of septic tanks. We urge riparian corridor and wetlands protections. We urge the application of cooling towers to all steam cycle power plants to avoid the discharge of vast quantities of waste heat into bodies of water, which reduces oxygen content and their ability to process municipal and agricultural waste, killing aquatic life and turning rivers into open sewers. We insist that Georgia pursue an environmentally responsible resolution to the Tri-State Water Conflicts.



6. ***Reduce Greenhouse Gases***

Support the honoring of U.S. commitments to international treaties to reduce green house gasses and other environmental concerns.

7. ***Population Growth***

We oppose policies that work to encourage population growth. We encourage public education that urges individuals to take personal responsibility for the impact on the global resource base of population growth. We oppose policies for coercive sterilization or contraception. We urge sensitivity in these educational efforts to the diversity of cultures on the planet. We encourage policies and education to honor and respect cultural viability/ integrity and personal autonomy both in the U.S. and globally.

8. ***Make the Switch to Renewable Fuels***

Greens advocate the conversion of the economy to truly renewable and clean fuels. Out of sight, out of mind pollution schemes are discouraged including electric power derived from coal burning and nuclear power plants. But we encourage the development of electric cars that derive their power from green energy, in particular, solar, wind and organically grown biomass (ethanol) fuels and power sources. We urge that all American gasoline be standardized at 5% ethanol to raise octane and absorb fuel system moisture, as well as achieve a partial switch to renewable gasoline and that the use of MTBE as a fuel oxygenate be discontinued because the breakdown products of MTBE in the air cause more lung damage than the ozone it is claimed to reduce, as well as MTBE being a profound water pollutant.

## **FAMILY**

*Children are entitled to housing, food, healthcare, education and the care of their family or guardian.*

The Preamble to the Constitution of the State of Georgia states that document's purpose as: "To . . . insure justice to all, preserve peace, promote the interest and happiness of the citizen and of the family . . . "

We believe that the State in its responsibility to its citizens has a duty to support and not interfere with loving, well functioning families. We also believe that the State has an equal responsibility to utilize every appropriate means possible to protect children from deprivation and abuse. We decry the negative long-term consequences of the physical and sexual abuse and assault that far too many of our young people have endured and continue to endure.

We are deeply concerned that a significant number of marriages and partnerships involve some type of abuse.

We know that stopping the violence will involve individuals making conscious choices to stop perpetuating the violence.

We find unacceptable the hetero-sexism and homophobia in our culture and public institutions that would deny willing and capable persons from knowing the joys, sorrows and responsibilities of parenthood.

As Greens we will:

### **1. Family**

Our view of family is welcoming of every committed voluntary loving partnership that Georgians might make with one another, that puts first, the support and care of whatever children may be a part of that family. We make this statement without concern for the sexual orientation, gender or gender-identity of the parents. We support access to adoption without discrimination based on one's gender or affectional preferences.

### **2. Marriage and Divorce**

We recognize a right to marry or to form similar committed relationships, regardless of sexual orientation, gender or gender identity. We will support appropriate changes to Georgia's Marriage Statutes that will afford those state privileges and responsibilities, currently offered to married couples, to committed Domestic Partnerships. We support the changes necessary in Community Property Laws so that Courts may fully recognize the contributions that Home workers make to permitting marriage partners outside the home to build wealth and equity, which ought to be shared equitably when dissolving a marriage and the partner's assets. We acknowledge that disparate access to money among divorcing partners creates a disparate access to effective counsel and almost always harms women in divorce, and almost always harms children in custody, visitation and support controversies.

### **3. Family Planning**

We support women accessing education and family planning services on their own terms. We oppose policies for coercive sterilization or contraception, currently being imposed by

many state DFACS offices and by some of Georgia's Juvenile Courts. We urge sensitivity in these educational efforts to the diversity of cultures in Georgia. We urge respect for cultural integrity and personal autonomy with respect to family planning issues. We must reduce infant mortality here in Georgia, by focusing on preventative, prenatal and post-partum health care including reducing the epidemic of neural tube defects through folic acid education campaigns. Pending the full implementation of a system of universal health care, we urge that priority be given to maternity care that results in healthy mothers, babies, and families. We will work to guarantee access to a full range of reproductive health services in and out of the hospital including prenatal care, midwifery care, delivery and post-partum care, including home visits and new parents mentoring programs. We will provide access to and funding for family planning information, contraceptives for both men and women and access to safe abortion for those who choose them.

#### **4. *Custody, Visitation and Support***

We recognize that we live in a culture where too many primary partnerships are marked with violence and abuse. We support existing laws that require that the probability of abuse is taken into account when handling divorce and subsequent matters brought to courts. We support the continued use of the best interest of the child standard, in deciding custody, visitation and support controversies. We believe that this best interest standard is served by using custody orders to maintain existing caregiving relationships and ties, including with the effected child's siblings and by providing continuity and stability in the child's homelife. We oppose efforts to change custody laws to create a rebuttable presumption of joint custody. We urge that judges be given the discretion and develop the discernment to recognize when a petition to change existing custody, visitation or support orders are used in ways that perpetuate the abuse and control that has been exercised by a petitioning parent over an ex-partner. We urge that judges exercise their discretion to protect children from becoming a pawn in court proceedings used to perpetuate the abuse and harassment of an ex-partner over a custodial parent, where a history of abuse exists.

#### **5. *Domestic Violence***

We will increase resources to prevent and respond to domestic violence. We will commit funding, resources and personnel to build a coordinated community-based response to the domestic violence in our homes, that emphasizes the accountability of the perpetrator and the protection of those victimized by abuse. We will implement the recommendations of the *Commission on Gender Bias in the Judicial System* in their June 1992 Report to the Supreme Court of Georgia. We will urge the allocation of resources to train police and court personnel to do their part to end domestic violence. We urge Greens and Georgians to challenge the sexist assumptions of our culture which are used to justify family violence. We urge the widespread adoption of batterer's intervention programs, based on the Duluth model, with ultimate accountability to the feminist battered women's movement.

#### **6. *Deprivation***

While we would agree that children must be protected from deprivation. We find that we do not always agree with what case workers consider deprivation. We urge that DHR employees with responsibilities for intervening in family situations be trained to respect the spiritual, religious and cultural practices of Georgia's diverse peoples and to distinguish from foreign practices and actual abuse. We would clarify governing statutes so that case workers need not mistake poverty for deprivation. We advocate that simple misdemeanor possession of marijuana not be used, unsupported by other evidence, as a basis for a finding of deprivation. We believe that a parent's refusal to put their children on Ritalin is not sufficient grounds to support a charge of deprivation.

## 7. **Education**

We are committed to Georgians being able to access lifelong education. We urge family and community involvement in Primary and Secondary Education. We will protect parents' abilities to attend, review and participate in their children's education. We urge employers to support parental involvement in their children's education with comp time and personal leave policies which are family supportive. We urge purchasing and contracting preferences that reward employers who adopt such policies.

## 8. **A Family Supportive Economy**

Many of the pressures which families currently face are related to the economic conditions in our communities. We support livable wages, family friendly work schedules, flextime, lifelong education, support for family owned farms and community scale businesses. We oppose public and private housing policies that discriminate against families, particularly families with children. We urge employers to permit work-at-home arrangements with appropriate protections to protect labor rights. We oppose those aspects of Workfare which we feel violate the Constitutional prohibition against *involuntary servitude* and the punitive sanctions created by the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Act and the 1997 Georgia Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Act. We commit to restructuring the public welfare program so that children have the benefit of their parent's time and energy; and that respects the autonomy of single parents. We recognize that children are entitled to housing, food, healthcare, education, and the care of their parents.

## FOREIGN POLICY

*There is no way to peace; peace is the way.*

We oppose U.S. military adventurism. We are not isolationists. We are committed to both personal and global responsibility. Our government does have a role in international affairs. However, we do not support the federal government assuming responsibility as world policeman. We are wary of the motives of U.S. foreign policy that uses military force to selectively protect human rights for some but not all. We recognize that frequently US foreign and military policy have been driven by corporate interests instead of the country's interests.

The United States and the Allied powers directly supported the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, resulting in the dispossession and ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian People from their historic homeland. Israel furthered its aggression against its Arab neighbors through the 1967 war which saw it extend an effective military occupation to the West Bank, Gaza, Sinai (at the time), and the Golan Heights. We seek to support the self-determination of the Palestinian people and to provide a political platform for the advocacy of the Palestinian right to return, and an end to the occupation consistent with our national party platform and its support for "a U.S. foreign policy that promotes the creation of one secular, democratic state for Palestinians and Israelis on the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan as the national home of both peoples, with Jerusalem as its capital."

The cause of the violence and the 40-year-old civil war in Colombia is economic and political inequality. All armed actors in this war have repeatedly violated human rights. The U.S. aid in Plan Colombia rewards the paramilitary groups supported by the Colombian Army who have committed the vast majority of the murder and torture, and who are often connected to international drug trafficking. Those who are paying the price are the poor farmers in areas controlled by leftist rebels who have little choice but to grow the coca plant for economic survival. Our tax dollars indiscriminately destroy their fields with herbicides and our arms shed the blood of these farmers as we repeat the errors and crimes of the Viet Nam War. With the war currently at a stalemate the US should allow peace to be negotiated, rather than adding fuel to the fire.

In Bolivia and Peru the War is being fought against indigenous people who have grown the coca plant for centuries for their own medicinal and ritual use, and who now rely on it as their major source of income. Draconian drug war policies and laws, adopted under pressure from the US government, have subjected these indigenous people to living in a militarized environment where they are regularly subjected to: unreasonable search of their bodies and properties, lengthy prison stays without trials or convictions, physical abuse and theft of their belongings by the a corrupt "anti-drug police." Military force in Bolivia has been used to repress the legal political activities of indigenous farmers' unions.

In Peru, US mercenaries, paid by the CIA, have encouraged the Peruvian airforce to carry out the routine shooting down of planes and which has resulted in the killing of innocent people simply because anyone who they fail to identify is considered to be a drug trafficker.

These crimes are repeated around the world wherever the war "on drugs" is being fought. The only way to slow the flow of drugs is to reduce demand in the US. We must just stop the military war on drugs.

As Greens we call for:

**1. *End Human Rights Violations Both Here and Abroad***

The key to long lasting peace is economic and environmental justice and reparations to those who have suffered. Generations of war and genocide can only be stopped by ending the violence with peaceful negotiations and reparations, not with bombing, sanctions and economic devastation. We do not support the use of depleted uranium in weapons used by the NATO and U.S. military. Poisoning water supplies, the Earth and air leads to more death and mounting health travesties that will be seen in not only this generation, but future generations as well.

**2. *Forgive International Debt***

Restructure the World Bank and the IMF. We oppose the manner in which the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have been administered to manipulate access to investment capital to attack the rights of working people to safe jobs paying livable wages and air, water and food safe for consumption. We call for an end to the “Structural Adjustment Programs” and forgiveness of international debt. Investments and loans must be targeted to achieve self-sufficiency and ecological sustainability.

**3. *Demilitarize the International War on Drugs***

We oppose the expansive powers granted by the Clinton administration to the Director of the Office of Drug Control Policy (the Drug Czar) to conduct militaristic foreign policy missions under the cover of drug production intervention. We oppose the massive arms sales being conducted in the name of fighting international drug trafficking and production. In particular we oppose Clinton's Billion Dollar *Plan Columbia* and the massive military aid funded with our tax dollars that are being used in the name of putting down so-called Narco-Terrorism, but which are actually being used in a genocidal war to repress and control indigenous communities and movements for land reform and justice in Columbia, South America. We oppose similar U.S. policies in Bolivia, Peru and wherever around the World our government funds war against poor people in the guise of halting drug flow into this country. We will stop the military war on drugs, not just in this country, but wherever our tax dollars fund such activities around the world. We will instead focus resources on treatment for addiction and drug abuse prevention at home. We will respect the traditional use of herbs by other cultures. We will stand in solidarity with poor farmers around the World in their struggles for economic justice.

**4. *Democratize the United Nations***

We urge the United States to lead a movement for UN Charter Reform to eliminate the privileged position of Security Council members and to work to build the UN into a tool for international peace making, reconciliation and environmental protection.

**5. *Abolish the CIA, End Covert Operations***

We would abolish the Central Intelligence Agency and those other federal agencies whose primary mission is and has been the conduct of covert military operations. Such activity is a direct threat to the security of democracy. We would reserve to Congress the power to declare war. And prohibit the Executive Branch from using military force without such a declaration.

**6. *Create a Peace Force; Committed to Non-Violent Strategies***

We believe that non-violence is the path to peace. While affirming the right of self- defense, we are committed to creating a future without war. The military serves a role we feel can be replaced by the organization and funding at both the national and international level of a

Peace Force which utilizes non-violent strategies and tactics to pursue Foreign Policy objectives outlined here.

**7. *Halt arms sales to Human Rights Abusers***

Pass Congresswoman McKinney's bill.

**8. *End the War of Economic Sanctions Against the People of Iraq***

The suffering has gone on too long. Thousands of children are dying every week in Iraq from preventable health problems and malnourishment as a direct result of the 1991 bombing and sanctions. Clinton ought to be held responsible for the 1998 bombing justified as retaliation for Hussein's refusal to cooperate with an UNSCOM inspection team staffed with U.S. spies. We ask the World Court to rule on the illegality of the use of Depleted Uranium weapons. We call on the U.S. government to commit to gathering and containing the radioactive waste left across the desert by its military actions.

**9. *Create a Meaningful and Lasting Peace in the Balkans***

Develop an effective strategy to create meaningful and lasting peace in the Balkans. Such a strategy must be based on an immediate end to the bombing and any other steps being proposed to escalate the violence. We call for the UN to intercede and protect the people of Serbia, Albania and Kosovo from both NATO aggression and from war crimes by Milosevic and others. We urge the OSCE to continue its reconciliation work interrupted by the bombing. We call on Congress to act to achieve these purposes.

**10. *Stop the War in Chiapas***

We call for an immediate halt to all arms sales (usually funded as drug interdiction activities) to the Mexican government. We recognize the rights of the indigenous Mayan people to autonomy and self-government in their homeland in the Mexican state of Chiapas. We urge the Zedillo administration to withdraw troops from their war in Chiapas and to restore the Constitutional protections afforded indigenous peoples prior to NAFTA's enactment.

**11. *End the War of Economic Sanctions Against the People of Cuba***

End the economic blockade against Cuba. Adopt a policy of reconciliation toward our neighbor to the South. We call for the repeal of the Helms-Burton Act.

**12. *Support an End to the Occupation of the Palestinian People and Palestinian Lands***

Our position must support the quest for peace with justice. In order to achieve such a goal, we make the following recommendations: (a) halting of any further settlement development in the Palestinian territories; (b) rolling back of present settler communities; (c) the creation of a one secular, democratic state for Palestinians and Israelis throughout Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital; (d) a sustained campaign to educate both sides of each other's language, heritage, and plight; (e) equitable access for Palestinians to Israeli educational institutions; (f) during the transition, the removal of the apartheid wall, checkpoints and other mechanisms which violate the right of Palestinians to the facilitation of commerce and free movement of the labor force aimed at raising the standard of living of the Palestinian People. We acknowledge the disproportionate level of violence in this conflict exerted by the Israeli state. Consistent with this we see a specific role for the Israeli state in halting such aggression so as to positively influence the potential for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. We support the just demands of the Palestinian solidary movement for boycott of, divestment from and sanctions of Israeli institutions. Specifically, we join the call for the termination of the Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange. This program was set up in the early 90's

with the cooperation of the state of Georgia with the purpose of operating as a type of law enforcement exchange or *study abroad* for current Police Officers with their counterparts in Israel. We call for the repeal of Georgia SB 327, which requires that companies or individuals contracting with the state not engage in activities related to the boycott of Israel. We oppose the use of the advisory definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Specifically, we advocate repeal of HB-30 from the 2023-24 Georgia Legislative Session.



## FORESTS

*Forests are indispensable to human and animal life and must be protected.*

Vast forests once covered most land. They moderate the Earth's climate and provide habitats for myriad species of wildlife. The Earth's remaining forests are a critical resource in that useful products, especially medicines, originate in the forest. Today's global market economy in the hands of multi-national corporations irresponsibly uses and often destroys this valuable and irreplaceable resource.

Chip mill operations in the southeast have proliferated within the past 10 years. Wood chipping is the most unregulated, highly mechanized arm of industrial forestry. In Georgia, forests are being unsustainably harvested in order to feed the state's 20 wood chipping facilities which combined are responsible for approximately 115,000 acres of clear-cuts each year. Clear-cutting degrades water quality and air quality, causes soil erosion and destroys wildlife habitat. The U.S. Forest Service has documented that over-cutting is occurring throughout the Southeast and that softwood removals exceed growth. In Georgia, nearly every county has been over-cut. Hundreds of jobs are exported to foreign paper mills when the chips are exported for foreign processing.

Hardwood chip exports increased by 500% from 1989 to 1995. The port of Mobile, Alabama is now the largest exporter of hardwood chips from the U.S. The southeast is now the largest pulp colony in the world. Hardwood industries such as saw mills and furniture manufacturers are jeopardized by chip mills that are chipping young hardwoods that would make tomorrow's lumber if left to grow. Saw mills and other hardwood users employ more than twice as many people per unit of wood harvested as the pulp wood industry. Only 6-10 people are needed to run a chip mill that can devour more wood in one month than an average-sized saw mill goes through in an entire year.

### ***1. Our Forest Must Be Protected***

We must overhaul Georgia and U.S. Forest Service rules to protect our forests and use them wisely. We must review, reform and restructure all Federal and State land-use policies so that landowners will not be burdened with extra taxes if they choose not to harvest their trees for lumber or pulp, and that forest practices become environmentally sustainable in a manner that will provide a continuing supply of high quality wood products.

### ***2. Support and Develop Sustainable, Conservative Forestry Practices, and Curtail Chip Mill Activity***

An environmental impact study must be conducted on the impacts of the wood chipping industry in Georgia. A moratorium on the permitting of any new chip mills or the expansion of existing chip mills should be placed in effect until the results of this study are determined.

### ***3. Eliminate Commercial Tree Harvesting in the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests***

These forests are only 1% of trees harvested in Georgia. We must restore them to the great forests they once were. This will be more beneficial to local communities because recreation and tourism provides 40 times more jobs than does the timber industry.

### ***4. Provide Economic Alternatives for Displaced Timber Industry Workers***

Once a zero-cut rule is enforced on our public lands, we must redirect federal forest funds to preferentially hiring displaced timber workers to perform forest restoration work. We must ban the export of raw logs and wood chips that cost American jobs.

5. ***Educate Consumers on Recycling, Renewable Resources, and Sustainability***

We should enforce practices that encourage reduction of paper usage since most of our forests are cut to make paper. We should develop comprehensive recycling and require that high content post-consumer waste paper be used for copying and printing, toilet paper, napkins, etc. in all government offices and public schools. We should grow and use hemp, bamboo and kenaf as plentiful and renewable resources for the manufacturing of paper and other forest products. Public policy must maintain, restore and protect wildlife habitats, fisheries, biodiversity, scenery and recreation. We must accept responsibility for the effect local actions have on the global economy and ecology.

## **GLOBAL POPULATION**

*We must demonstrate our leadership for equity and sustainability.*

The exponential growth of the impact of the global human population is arguably among the more serious threats to environmental integrity our planet now faces. We would like to stabilize this impact. But we reject the easy answers. This is a complicated issue with no clear "bad guys."

We reject the short-sighted premise that this is solely about population control. Throwing contraceptives and access to sterilization at this issue won't address the underlying causes of the exponential growth in the human population. People have large families to provide for their security. Creating meaningful security for everyone is the only guarantee we have of our own security. Our first priority is to recreate Georgia's infrastructure and our very culture of consumption.

Immigration is not the cause of declining real wages, growing income disparity, inequality and oppression. The cause is corporate exploitation. The solution is not nativism or protectionism. It's engaging in the sort of consciousness raising that enables us to see how these divisions are exploited to the advantage of a slim minority. The solution is to fight racism, sexism, classism, homophobia and heterosexism in ourselves and our own community. The solution is to join together to fight exploitation (of both people and the environment) on a local level and globally.

The United States does not have an overpopulation problem. The world does. Eliminating immigration would not do a single thing to ease the population burden on this planet. The US does, however, have an over consumption problem. 6% of the world's people live in the United States, but we use 50% of the world's resources and produce a third of the world's waste. We're all interdependent. As Greens, we will

### **1. *Support Women's Voices***

Working for a political voice for women is a prerequisite for women accessing education and family planning services on their own terms. These are the factors which have tracked declining family sizes.

### **2. *Stop the Exploitation of Immigrant Labor***

American workers are being pitted by the forces of fear and division against immigrant workers in a race to the bottom. It is time we loosen (if not eliminate) our restrictions on immigration. We must create an environment where workers subject to substandard wages and working conditions are safe from deportation when they organize on their job site or seek the enforcement of basic worker protections. Our failure to protect immigrant workers from exploitation dooms native born workers to declining wages and working conditions. The elimination or severe reduction of legal immigration won't stop illegal immigration. People are going to keep coming to this country as long as we live in a world where wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few and moving to this country is seen as a way to access a piece of that wealth. Slowing or stopping immigration is not a solution to any problem. Reducing inequality is.

3. ***Forgive Foreign Debt***

We endorse the Jubilee 2000 Campaign's call for international debt relief. The US must reduce its consumption and help developing nations increase the standard and security of their living.

4. ***Addressing the Impact of Global Population Growth***

We as a nation must address within our borders the inequalities in wealth and income distribution and health care. We must focus on unsustainable consumerism. We can have comfortable lives without consuming the world's resources. The U.S. is the primary destroyer of the Earth, we must accept responsibility for this and change our ways. We must clean up our own act first. Having taken these steps ourselves, this nation would be better positioned to engage in the international arena on the impact of global population growth and to help our global neighbors devise non-coercive strategies to address this impact which are respectful of the autonomy of the world's diverse cultures.

5. ***Sex Education, Family Planning and Infant Mortality***

We encourage domestic and international education that urges individuals to take personal responsibility for the impact on the global resource base of population growth. We oppose policies for coercive sterilization or contraception. We urge sensitivity in these educational efforts to the diversity of cultures on the planet. We encourage policies and education to honor and respect cultural viability/ integrity and personal autonomy both in the U.S. and globally. We must reduce infant mortality globally. We must focus on preventative health care. We must help improve the likelihood that newborns will survive into old age themselves. We will restore aid cut off in previous administrations to countries that includes education on abortion in their family planning programs.

## HEALTH CARE

*Return to us control over our own bodies!*

As individuals, it can be said that if we truly possess nothing else, we possess our own physical bodies. Our right to protect the life, death, health, and ultimate welfare of our own bodies should be absolute.

Currently, health care resources are distributed overwhelmingly to the upper class, and to the upper middle class. At the other end of the social spectrum, the elderly and the very poor obtain basic relief through Medicare and Medicaid.

In between, the system fails the "working poor" and much of the middle class -- those people who are neither able to afford private health insurance, nor able to pay for health care directly.

The new Governor spent his political capital and honeymoon session enacting an HMO package that offers little relief to the problems faced by both healthcare consumers and practitioners. Further, his bill exempts from the scrutiny of the new insurance advocate the Columbus based AFLAC, a major campaign contributor. The current trend is to restrict choice of both practitioner and modality of care. We oppose the limited window for exercising one's choice for out-of-network practitioners and the 17% monetary penalty for exercising this choice, imposed by Governor Barnes's new laws. We urge the Georgia Assembly to look at existing proven models that will provide universal access to healthcare for less money than the insurance industry charges now, serving only a fraction of the population.

Universal health care coverage needs to be administered by the state for two reasons: first, because access to health care should be considered a right of every American citizen; and second, because health insurance has evolved in a manner that deviates from the traditional insurance actuarial principles. Bending to competition between insurers and corporate pressures to reduce costs, health insurers have resorted to "experience based" "insurance" for small groups. Actuarial science is based on the theory of large numbers. By deviating from these principles, employees of small companies end up unable to afford health insurance and do not get good medical care. This happens to small businesses who tend to hire the "working poor" and lower middle classes. Those who need health care the most - the sick and the dying - are inevitably denied insurance and care.

But because private health insurers treat risk in the same manner as auto insurance companies and homeowner's insurance companies, those who need health care the most the sick and the dying -- are inevitably denied insurance and care. To promote a healthy respect for the living, the sick, and the dying, the Green Party will strive to:

### **1. *Make Health Coverage and Consumer Choice a Right***

Other great democracies already recognize Universal Health Coverage as a right of citizenship. It is time for America to do the same. We need to support a national single-payer health care system that includes all providers and assures consumer choice and freedom. The model is simple. The plan pays for basic services, and up to a specified amount. Sums and services beyond those basic levels can be paid for on an elective basis by the patient individually.

### **2. *Tobacco Settlement Can Fund Universal Care***

Create a Georgia Health Care Corporation to receive the tobacco settlement funds and to use them to provide universal access to health care in a system that includes all providers, and assures consumer choice and freedom, including proven "alternative" and

"complementary" health care disciplines and practices, and with emphasis and priority given to health measures and education designed to prevent the need for curative health measures.

3. ***Separate Health Care from Employment***

A single-payer system also separates health care from employment status and share risks much more broadly. Employees shouldn't be tied to bad jobs for fear of losing coverage. And employers shouldn't have to worry about hiring employees with existing medical conditions.

4. ***Shift Emphasis to Prevention***

Preventive health care has made great progress. Preventive health measures and education should be given funding and priority over curative health measures.

5. ***Promote Reproductive Health***

Create maternity care that results in healthy mothers, babies, and families. Guarantee access to a full range of reproductive health services in and out of the hospital including prenatal care, delivery and post-partum care, midwifery care. Also provide access to and funding for family planning information, contraceptives for both men and women and as a last resort, abortion. We urge that Health Insurance providers licensed to operate in Georgia be required to offer comprehensive healthcare including coverage of the costs of contraceptives.

6. ***Fund and Study Alternate Forms of Medicine***

Only 150 years ago, physicians talking about *bacteria* and *germs* were labeled kooks. Today, progressive thinking and research should not be similarly derailed. Alternative health therapies should be carefully researched. Marijuana, although listed as Schedule 1, suggesting it has no medicinal value, has a long history of effective use as a healing agent, and we urge that it be de-listed and that the Governor of Georgia use his existing discretion to appoint a Panel to oversee the use of Marijuana for its medicinal qualities in Georgia. By the same token, legal drugs, such as nicotine and alcohol, whose harmful effects are already known, should be more closely regulated.

7. ***Fund and Study Alternate Forms of Health Care***

Establish evidence-based health care standards in all health care disciplines. Expand health care choices to include proven "alternative" and "complementary" health care disciplines and practices. Affirm and enforce the rights of health care consumers to have complete information about all the choices available regarding all aspects of their health care, and the right to refuse care. Change laws that prevent the use of alternative medical practices. Reduce the monopolistic power of the American Medical Association by subsidizing medical training for increased numbers of physicians.

8. ***Honor Quality of Life over Quantity***

Keeping patients alive beyond all reasonable standards of quality of life is both expensive and inhumane. We must stop extreme measures to "prolong" life when dignity and quality of life suffers. We must also provide for humane methods to end life when modern medicine fails.

9. ***Acknowledge that Resources are Limited***

We urge community input and involvement, including public hearings and community referenda as a part of the Certificate of Need process, administered by the State Health Planning Agency. Community input should be considered when evaluating additional health services and / or evaluating existing health services. We support increased study in the outcomes of medical procedures. Adopt a plan similar to the plan proposed in Oregon, one in which the allocation of health resources is based on the expected outcome related to the expense. Expensive procedures that only marginally prolong life, or sacrifice quality of life, should not be funded by the single payer system. This should be left to the individual or family as an option for private funding.

10. ***Acknowledge an Individual's Right to Die with Dignity***

Allow for the humane ending of a life under the directive of someone having a durable power of attorney to make medical decisions for someone. We encourage public education on the issues involved with a living will.

11. ***Mental Health Care for Indigent***

Our fellow human beings who are suffering with chemical imbalances should be provided with the best health care so they can have happy exceptional lives. Haldol and Cogentin cause irreparable nerve damage and are not used in any other country, yet they are dispersed to the indigent and poor daily, while the wealthy are given far superior Mental Health Care Treatment. It is far less costly to give more effective, and less dangerous medication so that individuals can have the best possible scenario rather than to incarcerate folks or to abandon them to homelessness.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

*End all discrimination.*

We live in a society and an economy built upon the supremacy of wealthy, straight, white men. The privilege afforded people in this hierarchy exists at the expense of the oppression of others. Given the myth of scarcity that has driven the economy, these hierarchies of privilege have served as a means of allocating and distributing the wealth, material resources, and privileges of the culture.

But scarcity is a myth. We live in a world of abundance. And the notion of white male entitlement is silly at the very least. All life is sacred in the eyes of the Creator, by whatever name we may each individually know that Creative Force. The notions of manifest destiny and divine right do not serve the cause of justice. They serve the interests of private profit. They have justified disparate access to education, housing, jobs and wages.

We understand that racism and sexism are not about our personal prejudices. They speak to the deeply ingrained patterns that permeate the institutions of our culture. While we must individually strive to unlearn prejudices on a personal level, as a political party we must strive to transform our society's institutions.

Another myth is that the Civil Rights and Women's Movements have fully accomplished their goals -- that there is now equal access to the material and other benefits of the culture; that the need for affirmative action has been met; that anyone who works hard and perseveres can succeed.

As Greens, we reject this myth. We know that the work of the Liberation Movement has only begun. We commit ourselves to claiming our role in that movement and speaking out for justice everywhere we see it lacking. Racism, sexism, heterosexism and classism are still prevalent, and their effects are still damaging. Those who are extended its privileges are often blind to its existence. Those who are denied its privileges often internalize the myths of their own inferiority, live invisible lives, and fail to reach their own potential.

We recognize that privacy, autonomy and personal sovereignty are fundamental human rights. We intend to transform a culture of fear into a culture of hope, creativity and possibility. We are profoundly committed to the preservation the Bill of Rights and those future changes to the U.S. Constitution that have expanded our conception of human rights and human freedom. We are now responsible to make our contributions to this document which written and ratified by slave and property owners, still has offered some seminal theory of human freedom. We intend to turn that theory into reality for all who find themselves in this country and for our global family.

The antiterrorism legislation passed by the U.S. Congress since the tragic and murderous September 11, 2001 attacks on our nation, seriously damage and infringe upon the constitutional protections that are enshrined in our Bill of Rights. It is not patriotic, but rather Un-American to destroy the very freedoms which cause Americans to love their country. Open government is critical to democracy. Imposing new levels of secrecy creates the appearance that our government is less than trustworthy and inhibits our ability to make informed choices in our own self-government. Weakening the Judicial and Legislative branches, while simultaneously extending to the Executive branch unchecked powers does damage to the American principle of separation of powers.

We oppose homophobic violence and discrimination against gender non-conforming people, including those who identify as transgender and nonbinary. We are committed to upholding, protecting, promoting, and defending the full human and civil rights for all, regardless of their



willingness to conform to gendered expectations, including for people who identify as transgender and nonbinary. We will protect equal rights, without discrimination based on conformity with sex-role stereotypes, to serve on juries and to access housing, employment, credit, education and healthcare. We affirm the rights of gender non-conforming people to freedom to dress and express themselves as they please and to freedom from violence, discrimination and harassment.

We believe that it is possible for responsible policy makers to weigh the conflicts between existing law and the demands of those campaigning for the legal protections of trans-identified individuals, and to find nuanced approaches which will protect the latter without gutting from the former the gains that women have made for the protection of the sex-based rights of women under the law.

We are extremely concerned for the questionable medical ethics at play when children, incapable for fully informed consent, are subject to medical interventions under so-called gender-affirming protocols, involving puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and so-called sex-reassignment surgeries. The lack of peer-reviewed research to support such protocols; the well documented list of adverse side effects associated with these protocols; the many scientific studies which tell us that dysphoric distress including mental anguish and self-harming ideation is so often not resolved by these medical interventions; the additional scientific studies which report that gender dysphoria generally resolves itself by the late teens for 80% or more of Early Onset patients under a protocol of watchful waiting; and the growing number of young adults who have chosen to detransition, even after their health has been compromised and their reproductive systems have been left sterile by medical interventions; all of these factors urge caution in the rush to transition the gender of children with medical experimentation. Such practices have been said to '(bind) children to traditional gender stereotypes, and (to) medically (harm) them through lifechanging irreversible procedures'.

We know that the mostly women in prostitution suffer post-traumatic stress disorder at rates which rival those of combat veterans and torture victims, traumatic brain injuries at rates greater than pro football players, rapes, assaults, abuse, sexual harassment and degradation as an expected part of their day-to-day experience in this exploitative industry. The inspiring success (65%+ drop in its first eight years) of the Swedish Prostitution Reform Act of 1999 shows us that the abolition of the exploitation of prostitution is possible. Commonly known these days as the Nordic Model, sometimes as the Equality Model, researchers in Sweden have shown that by protecting those victimized by commercial sexual exploitation from prosecution, while funding the social services sufficient to a meaningful exit strategy for the 89% who tell researchers they want to leave the industry, while prosecuting traffickers, pimps and panderers, it is possible to drastically reduce the carnage of this exploitative industry.

Efforts by advocates for the rights of trans-identified individuals have campaigned for the inclusion of 'gender-identity' as a protected class under existing civil rights law. Feminist organizers around the world have identified such policy demands as in conflict with the existing sex-based rights of women and have called for opposition to gender-identity protections which fail to account for the concerns of women. Elevating gender-identity on a par with sex as a protected class pits the established sex-rights of women against the demands for inclusion and protection by trans-identified persons. However, a prohibition of discrimination based on 'sex stereotypes' provides many important protections for trans-identified individuals without placing at risk the sex-based rights of women."

Global surrogacy, in spite of the impact of the COVID19 pandemic, had an estimated market value of \$4 billion in 2020, down from \$5.5 billion in 2019, and is estimated to grow at rates exceeding 30% over much of the coming decade, to nearly \$34 billion by 2027. Demand grows largely in the global West dependent on wealthy or desperate would-be parents. Surrogacy is offered as a technological solution to infertility, an issue growing in its reach due to environmental factors such as exposure to toxics in the workplace, in poorly-regulated consumer products and in the industrial discharges to the air we breathe and the water we drink. Fertility issues are exacerbated by economic factors (including student debt and declining wages) motivating personal choices to postpone reproduction. The Global South is left to supply the wombs and bodies of impoverished women as a locus for production. A growing number of nations, acting on their commitments under the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, have in recent years enacted laws to prohibit the exploitation by the international surrogacy market of women within their borders. This has served to shift this market in the bodies of women into unregulated jurisdictions, particularly South Asia, Eastern Europe and a couple of nations in Africa. The practice in the United States is largely unregulated or too often explicitly permitted (on a state-by-state basis) in this nation. Women used in surrogacy and their offspring are often exempt from the usual protections of the adoption process, under a patchwork of statutory and case law environments. A longitudinal study first circulated in 2012 for peer review, found that "surrogacy children showed higher levels of adjustment difficulties at age 7 than children conceived by gamete donation." This study concluded that the "absence of a gestational connection to the mother may be more problematic for children than the absence of a genetic link." Industry narratives promoting so-called 'altruistic' surrogacy seem to expect young women to exhibit the altruism of selflessly giving over their bodies to assist couples facing fertility issues, but never seem to expect the same of the lawyers who broker surrogacy contracts or the banks which finance the costs of assistive reproductive technologies. Anecdotal evidence from jurisdictions which prohibit gestational surrogacy while making an exception for altruistic surrogacy indicate that the prohibition against monetary remuneration often provide cover for backdoor compensation plans which defeat the intention of the legal exception.

As Greens, we will:

1. ***Protect and Expand Affirmative Action***

To address the continuing inequities in access to education, jobs and promotions.

2. ***Ensure Legal Recognition for Domestic Partnerships***

Including the right to marriage regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

3. ***Make Reparations to African-Americans***

Officially acknowledge and apologize for Georgia's and the United States' historic wrongdoing in the enslavement of Africans. We commit to full and complete reparations to the African-American community for the past four hundred plus years of genocide, slavery, land-loss, destruction of original identity and the present-day conditions which have evolved from this history. We recognize that reparations are a debt that is owed to a collective of people and that the leadership on this question of right ought to come from the Black community, whose autonomy to chart the path to healing we fully recognize. While consensus is still evolving on what would constitute full and complete reparations, we support the following initial steps. Until the reparations process can be completed, we support an exemption on income tax for descendants of enslaved people. We support the creation of a claim of action and a right to recover inherited wealth and other profits accumulated from the slave trade for the benefit of a reparations trust fund. We will initiate the repeal of the slave

clauses that survive today in the U.S. Constitution. We will work to restore lands stolen through a variety of tactics including: violence, terrorism and the discriminatory access to operating capital which together has robbed Black Farmers and the broader Black community of their lands. We support the release of political prisoners convicted of non-violent crimes. We will support new and existing Black Universities, as well as Education and Development Funds.

4. ***Make Reparations to Native Americans***

Officially acknowledge and apologize for Georgia's and the United States' historic wrongdoing in removing Native Nations, and violating treaties with them, for the settlement of Georgia. We commit to full and complete reparations for the past five hundred plus years of genocide, land-theft, treaty violations, destruction of culture and the present-day conditions which have evolved from this history. We recognize that reparations are a debt that is owed collectively to Native peoples and that the leadership on this question of right ought to come from the Native community, whose autonomy to chart the path to healing we fully recognize. While consensus is forged on what would constitute full and complete reparations, we support the following initial steps. Until the reparations process can be completed, we support an exemption on income tax for descendants of Indigenous People. We urge that Georgia fund a study in cooperation with Native Nations removed from Georgia of the dispossession and recommendations for correcting these injustices.

5. ***Stop Violence and Discrimination***

We endorse stopping violence and discrimination against women, people of color, lesbians, gays, gender non-conforming people, including those who identify as transgender and nonbinary, the poor, the homeless, children, elders, immigrants, the differently-abled and the imprisoned.

6. ***Stop the Use of Racist Team Mascots***

We support the American Indian Movement who has since 1975 urged sports teams to stop the offensive use of mascots which refer to racial or ethnic groups. We urge the Commissioner of Major League Baseball and Ted Turner, the owner of the Atlanta baseball franchise to honor the requests of the Native community for respect. We support legislation which would prohibit the use of public funds to support professional, community or school teams which use offensive mascots and prohibit those teams from playing at publicly funded facilities. We urge the media to refrain from referring in their sports reports by name to teams which use offensive mascots.

7. ***We Will Reclaim and Protect Our Right to Privacy***

We will oppose and roll back the ever expanding web of corporate and governmental intrusion into our lives and persons experienced in so many ways, including random and universal searches of our persons and our property at schools, transportation centers and government buildings; police road blocks and random police stops; mandatory fingerprint, retinal scans, etc. identification for government or corporate uses; governmental eavesdropping on its citizens whether by random searches of voice phone conversations or surveillance of political associations, absent a warrant issued in the investigation of an actual past crime; property seizures absent conviction of a crime.

8. ***Rights to Parent without Unreasonable State Intervention***

We affirm the need for community and in some instances state intervention to protect children from abuse and deprivation. It takes a village to raise a child. Still we are concerned about the cultural, classist and racist biases of DFACS workers that so often result in the needless destruction of families without contributing substantively to the safety and welfare of

children. When DFACS becomes involved, it can take up to four years for children to be reunited with their parents. In many cases children are placed in situations far worse than the homes from which they were removed. We recommend that the definition of deprivation be narrowed to prevent the Department of Human Resources and the Juvenile Courts from breaking up families for 1) refusing to participate in compulsory schooling that the child or parents find irrelevant to the child's education or harmful to the child's psyche; 2) refusing to participate in the dominant religious institutions of their community; 3) for choosing non-traditional living conditions; 4) for choosing vegetarian, vegan or other non-traditional, yet healthy, diets; 5) for refusing vaccinations, Ritalin or other invasive pharmaceutical products or medical treatments; or 6) for following the reasonable advice of the child's competent health care practitioner.

**9. *Right to Housing***

We support a constitutional right to housing and life-time tenancy and statutory tenant protections from excessive rent increases, condo conversion, unsafe living conditions and eviction without representation and sixty days notice. We support a prohibition on housing discrimination on the basis of age, children, race, ethnicity, gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, HIV status, nationality, religious faith or lack of faith or practice. We urge passage of the National Housing Trust Fund (S.1248 and H.R.2349 in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, to use FHA surplus moneys to create a trust fund to support the production of new rental housing for the lowest income families, particularly those individuals living at or below 30% of their community's median income or the Federal minimum wage.

**10. *Repeal the PATRIOT Act***

We demand the immediate repeal of the PATRIOT Act. We call upon our elected representatives to act in accordance with the Constitution of the United States and to undo these actions which violate the core principles of America. We oppose the use of secret military tribunals at which a person is afforded no independent defense counsel and could be sentenced to prison or execution without the knowledge of the American people. We oppose the President's executive orders to lock down Presidential records, denying our ability to judge the actions of the Executive. We oppose the indefinite imprisonment of foreign nationals where no criminal charge has been brought. We oppose arrests or detentions in the absence of public charges. We oppose the "sneak and peek" provision of the PATRIOT Act, which crushes our Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable search and seizure by denying citizens their right to be aware that their property is to be searched and their right to protest such search if the warrant is out of order. We oppose the collection of private business records by order of secret courts and the muzzling of those citizens who receive such orders from speaking publicly about them. This is a violation of both the First and Fourth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. We oppose the PATRIOT Act's destruction of e-mail and Internet privacy and find the sharing of such data indiscriminately among any number of government agencies and even foreign governments is patently intolerable.

**11. Endorse Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights; Protect Children from Medical Experimentation; Sports Opportunities for Women and Girls; and the Privacy, Boundaries and Dignity of Women and Girls**

The Georgia Green Party here endorses the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights, as developed and publicized by the Women's Human Rights Campaign, and encourage our members, our national party, policy makers and the general public to do the same. We will regulate access to gender-affirming therapies to protect Georgia children from medical experimentation, prosecuting ethical violations involved with subjecting children incapable of fully informed consent to such life-changing and irreversible procedures. We will protect women and girls from unfair competition in sports by male-bodied athletes. We will protect girls and women in the enjoyment of female-only facilities, programs, or services, particularly in places where women have a need to be in a state of undress, or where their privacy may be compromised or their safety may be at risk from male-pattern violence.

**12. Support the Nordic / Equality Model for State Regulation of Prostitution**

Greens support a goal of abolishing prostitution, with the adoption of Nordic-Model inspired reforms which: (1) criminalize pimping and pandering, (2) protect those prostituted by the industry from prosecution, (3) offers survivors social support sufficient to an exit strategy, and (4) leverage public educational resources to address men's sense of entitlement to sexual access to women's bodies. We advocate immediate reform of Georgia's Safe Harbor Act, to provide for a presumption that anyone engaged in prostitution or solicitation under state statute and related local ordinances was indeed acting under 'coercion or deception'; and ought as a consequence of that presumption, to be protected from prosecution. We urge increased fines and fees, already authorized for the existing Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund to accommodate the larger client base for social services which these changes will generate, to build new capacity for the battered women's shelters and other social services necessary to facilitate an effective exit from the industry. We urge that the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council develop new protocols and retrain law enforcement officers across the state to treat the mostly women and children involved in prostitution as victims of criminal exploitation rather than as criminal suspects.

**13. Support Passage of the Equality Act, as Amended by the Feminist Amendments**

The Georgia Green Party endorses passage of the Equality Act (HR-5 / SB-788, in the 116th Congress) as amended by the Feminist Amendment developed by [FeministStruggle.org](https://www.feministstruggle.org) intended to protect the sex-based rights of women while adding to existing Civil Rights statutes related to employment, housing, credit and jury service, two new protected classes to protect people from discrimination based on 'sexual orientation' and 'sex stereotyping'. We further support the adoption of similar state level reforms."

**14. Protect Victims of Revenge Porn and Sex Trafficking**

The Georgia Green Party endorses passage of the "Survivors of Human Trafficking Fight Back Act" (S.4983 in the 116th Congress), as amended to delete the reference to gametes in the proposed changes to Title 18 US Code Section 1591(e)(7)(C) and the removal of the mandatory minimum sentence in the proposed changes to 18 US Code Section 1591(e)(4). This bill, if enacted, would protect with criminal penalties and a cause for civil action those victimized by the distribution, online or otherwise, of pornographic materials of them, produced or distributed without their consent.

**15. *Endorse the Draft International Convention for the Abolition of Surrogacy***

The Georgia Green Party finds that surrogate motherhood relies on the appropriation and trafficking of women's reproductive capacities and poses threats of serious physical endangerment and psychological anguish for the women contracted to carry surrogate children and psychological issues for their children. These adverse impacts are not mitigated by labeling the arrangement as altruistic. The practice infringes on, reinforces and perpetuates inequality between women and men. We endorse the "Draft International Convention for the Abolition of Surrogacy," crafted by the International Coalition for the Abolition of Surrogate Motherhood. We will work to protect women in Georgia and globally from the predatory domestic and global surrogacy market and its reliance on the trafficking of impoverished women's bodies. We urge would-be parents who might have considered surrogacy to consider instead the meaningful contributions they might make as foster or adoptive parents, provided that the conflicting interests of all parties to these family formation practices are ethically and legally protected. In the interest of addressing infertility, we urge reliance upon the precautionary principle and the recommendations elsewhere in this document related to economic and environmental policy and consumer and labor protections.

## IMPEACHMENT

### *Restore Integrity to the Oval Office*

The Constitution of the United States of America (in Article II, Section 4) provides that Congress shall have the power to impeach and try the "President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, (who) shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors."

The Georgia Green Party calls for the Impeachment of the President of the United States and urges its local affiliates and members, as well as the Green Party of the United States to also endorse and actively work in the movement to Impeach the President.

President George W. Bush has committed violations and subversions of the Constitution of the United States of America in an attempt to carry out with impunity crimes against peace and humanity and war crimes and deprivations of the civil rights of the people of the United States and other nations, by assuming powers of an imperial executive unaccountable to law and usurping powers of the Congress, the Judiciary and those reserved to the people of the United States, by the following acts:

- 1) Subverting the letter and the intent of the Constitution with a wide range of conduct including but not limited to: trying to suspend the constitutional Writ of Habeas Corpus; ramming the totalitarian U.S.A. Patriot Act through Congress; the mass-round-up and incarceration of foreigners; kangaroo courts; depriving at least two United States citizens of their constitutional rights by means of military incarceration; interference with the constitutional right of defendants in criminal cases to lawyers; violating and subverting the Posse Comitatus Act; unlawful and unreasonable searches and seizures; violating the First Amendments rights of the free exercise of religion, freedom of speech, peaceable assembly, and to petition the government for redress of grievances; packing the federal judiciary with totalitarian judges and undermining the judicial independence of the Constitution's Article III federal court system; violating the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions and the U.S. War Crimes Act; violating the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; reinstatement of the infamous COINTELPRO Program; violating the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, the Convention against Torture, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; instituting the totalitarian Total Information Awareness Program; and establishing a totalitarian Northern Military Command for the United States of America itself.
- 2) Violating the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution in that U.S. soldiers in the Middle East are overwhelmingly poor White, Black, and Latino and their military service is based on the coercion of a system that has denied viable economic opportunities to these classes of citizens. Under the Constitution, all classes of citizens are guaranteed equal protection of the laws, and calling on the poor and minorities to fight a war for oil to preserve the lifestyles of the wealthy power elite of this country is a denial of the rights of these soldiers.
- 3) In violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, the President has violated the U.S. Constitution, federal law, and the United Nations Charter

by bribing, intimidating and threatening others, including the members of the United Nations Security Council, to support belligerent acts against Iraq.

4) In violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, has prepared, planned and conspired and finally executed a massive war of catastrophic aggression against Iraq by employing methods of mass destruction that resulted in the killing of thousands of civilians, many of whom were children. This included the threatened use of nuclear weapons, and the use of indiscriminate weapons and massive killings by aerial bombardment, or otherwise, of civilians, in violation of the Hague Regulations on land warfare, the rules of customary international law set forth in the Hague Rules of Air Warfare, the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I thereto, the Nuremberg Charter, Judgment, and Principles, the Genocide Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and U.S. Army Field Manual 27-10 (1956).

5) He has committed the United States to acts of war without congressional consent and contrary to the United Nations Charter and international law. From September, 2001 through January, 2003, the President embarked on a course of action that systematically eliminated every option for peaceful resolution of the Persian Gulf crisis. Once the President approached Congress for consent to war, tens of thousands of American soldiers' lives were in jeopardy - rendering any substantive debate by Congress meaningless.

In all of this and more George Walker Bush has acted in a manner contrary to his trust as President and subversive of constitutional government, to the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States. George Walker Bush, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.



## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

*Provide services to all people who use public utilities  
in an affordable and nondiscriminatory manner.*

The Georgia Green Party supports all people having access to these important services that everyone requires in this society.

### **1. *Protect Consumers from Abuses by Monopolies***

Prevent monopolistic structures and practices. If a truly competitive model with many producers and no barriers to entry to the market is not feasible due to the nature of the service, then the monopolistic practice must be strictly regulated. Such regulation must be enforced by a Public Service Commission that is responsive to the needs of all consumers and small businesses. It must also give top priority to protecting the environment.

### **2. *Stop Merger Mania***

Stop the merger-mania that is creating a few extremely large companies. Large companies that unfairly dominate the market can be stopped with current regulatory and anti-monopoly laws if politicians have the political will to enforce these laws. Large companies must be stopped from controlling the enforcement of these laws through the use of large campaign contributions.

### **3. *Replace Nuclear and Coal with Solar Energy***

Support the development of safe, cleaner energy, especially solar-derived energy. We support the immediate phase-out of inefficient and unsafe nuclear and coal plants. The Public Service Commission should use its rate approving authority to force the closure of coal and nuclear power plants.

### **4. *Restructure to Protect Workers, Consumers and the Environment***

Support restructuring the electric utility industry in a manner that will benefit all consumers. Ensure and promote environmentally friendly production facilities. Protect workers and citizens health and safety and reward clean and efficient producers of energy.

### **5. *Protect Ratepayers from Unregulated Investments***

Protect the consumer from out-of-control corporations. Consumers and ratepayers must be protected from the risks being taken by the Southern Company as they invest in foreign and unregulated markets.

## **SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS**

### *Close the School of Assassins.*

The US Army School of the Americas (SOA), located at Ft. Benning, Georgia, has trained nearly 50,000 military officers from throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean.

More than sixty percent of the Salvadoran military officers cited in the 1993 United Nations Truth Commission report for massacres, assassinations, and other human rights abuses, were graduates of the SOA. More than forty percent of Colombian officers cited by an international human rights tribunal were graduates of the SOA. Many of the top military officials involved in Mexico's counterinsurgency war in Chiapas are SOA graduates. Many graduates of the SOA have been indicted for human rights abuses and drug trafficking in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Peru, including Gen. Manuel Noriega of Panama, Roberto D'Aubisson of El Salvador, Gen. Hector Gramajo of Guatemala, and Gen. Hugo Banzar of Bolivia.

Human rights observers, church leaders, peasant organizations, student and lawyers' groups have identified numerous SOA graduates as responsible for acts of torture, assassination, kidnapping, drug trafficking, disappearances, rape, and death squad activity throughout Latin America. Despite the US Army School of Americas' attempts to downplay the crimes committed by SOA graduates to deny that the SOA taught undemocratic and illegal acts, the US Department of Defense revealed in 1996, that training manuals used at the SOA included sections on torture, execution, blackmail, and paying bounties for the assassinations of community leaders.

The history of the SOA runs contrary to our principles of respect for human rights and democracy.

As Greens, we call for:

### **1. *Close the School of Assassins***

The immediate closure of the School of the Americas. The U.S. Congress and the Executive Branch should, without delay, eliminate funding for and close the School of the Americas at Ft. Benning, Georgia.

## TAXES

*Create a progressive tax system that taxes wastes, pollution wealth and income to support equitable access to a basic income for all.*

The current trend in taxation in Georgia has been towards a regressive tax system that takes from the poor and gives to the rich. The capitalistic system our country has adopted, while offering many benefits, has also promoted a misallocation of wealth and income.

Allowing financial speculators to reap the full benefit of their manipulations leads to many evils. Executives 'downsize' and lay off workers because productivity is no longer necessary to produce the kind of value they are interested in. Financial fraud and lying are sufficient to produce 'value' in a speculative stock market bubble. Government manipulates capital gains rates to maximize tax collections from a speculative bubble.

Thus government revenues become dependent on executive lying and fraud, and it becomes in the financial interest of government to further a society where value is created out of thin air and that society becomes a house of cards.

Business executives are paid largely in stock options and kept in their jobs by stockholders yearning for speculative capital gains. Thus both the job and the pay rate of the executive are dependent on the fraudulent ballooning of stock values.

Likewise, real estate becomes a simultaneous financial bubble, where a man has a price on his head equal to his threat to the speculative value of real estate. Thus, the proliferation of gated communities and high-end developments of houses bought for speculation by their owners. Built by speculators in land and housing, each house brings more profit than a good-sized cocaine deal. The power of these floods of money to corrupt government and society at all levels is immense. Is it any wonder government is responsive primarily to speculative interests?

As Greens, we will:

### **1. Federal Budget Priorities**

It is time our tax dollars were spent on the general welfare, as provided for in the preamble of the Federal Constitution, instead of the welfare of generals. We call for an immediate 50% or greater cut in U.S. Military spending. We urge the investment of the peace dividend in 1) the creation of a Peace Force committed to non-violent strategies, 2) retraining and job placement of workers displaced by changing federal spending priorities, 3) the containment and restoration of the Department of Defense's nuclear and hazardous waste sites, 4) the retirement of national debts incurred to prosecute wars, grants for assisting impacted communities in making the transition to participation in a peace economy, 6) programs to foster food, water and environmental security. We urge comprehensive cuts in corporate welfare and subsidies which undermine worker and environmental protection. We recommend the following programs as priorities for cuts: nuclear weapons development, testing, manufacture and deployment, including depleted uranium weapons.

### **2. Peace Tax Fund**

We urge the creation of a Peace Tax Fund to receive and disburse for non-military purposes, the tax payments of those who hold a conscientious objection to the payment of war taxes.

3. ***Institute a Progressive Tax Policy***

Change the tax code so that it no longer benefits the extremely wealthy at the expense of poor and working people. The marginal utility of increased wealth is far lower for the rich person than it is for the poor. This is the reason we need a progressive tax system that equalizes the burden of the system rather than the dollar amounts paid.

4. ***Tax Capital Gains on a Par with Labor***

We support making 100% of capital gains taxable, to be counted as taxable income the same as money earned by working. This will give work the same value as financial speculation in the eyes of our government and society.

5. ***Eliminate Regressive Sales Taxes***

Municipalities should obtain their income from local progressive income taxes or property taxes. Municipalities should charge large impact fees for new development that will pay for new infrastructure and schools needed as a result of the development. This will increase the cost of development and tend to slow down sprawl in new suburbs in favor of using and maximizing existing infrastructure investments. Existing residents of a community have already paid or are in the process of paying for their infrastructure. They should not have to pay for new infrastructure used to support new residents.

6. ***End Regressive User's Fees***

End regressive user's fees that are being applied to basic services. Services that benefit the community should not be paid through user's fees by individuals.

7. ***Pollution and Extraction Taxes***

We must give the appropriate economic signals to the marketplace by imposing taxes on raw materials extraction, waste generation and the discharge of pollutants into the environment. As Greens we will review the tax code for subsidies to wasteful or polluting industries and repeal these tax incentives so that our tax policy conforms with our public policy.

8. ***Stop Privatization***

End the current trend to privatize public facilities and services. Privatization does not necessarily result in benefits to the community. It is often a way to shift the tax burden to users. Like other user's fees, this shifts the burden of paying for basic services to the poor. Private businesses are not implicitly more efficient than public services.

9. ***Maximum Wage Bill Endorsement***

Higher standards of living usually correspond with lower birth rates. We endorse the maximum wage bill proposed by United for a Fair Economy, which would cap the deductibility from corporate taxable income of employee or contractor compensation which exceeds twenty-five times the annualized wages or salary of the lowest paid employee or contractor in a firm. It's time we stopped using our tax dollars to subsidize corporate behavior which has led to such great income disparities. No other mechanism is more apt to encourage responsible corporate behavior than creating this economic incentive.

## TRANSPORTATION AND LAND-USE

*Plan roads and neighborhoods that make it possible to live without a total dependence on the automobile.*

Large metropolitan areas in Georgia are suffering from "sprawl" --new development that spreads farther and farther from the central city (and employment areas) into the suburbs and surrounding agricultural areas. The pattern assures an ever-increasing dependence on the automobile and works to preclude opportunities for more efficient means of transportation. The result is increased traffic congestion, increased smog and water pollution, increased illness and death from respiratory diseases, and more and more tax money needed to fund the maintenance and expansion of . . . more roads to the suburbs.

Today, metropolitan Atlantans drive more per capita than any other people in the United States, and the state of Georgia has already been denied federal highway funds because of its high ozone and pollution levels. Instead of reducing pollution to meet the laws, Georgia's only current strategy for solving the problem seems to be to lobby Congress to repeal the pollution laws -- laws that were designed to provide for us a bare minimum level of health protection.

Clearly, current transportation and land-use policies are not sustainable. It is time Georgia changes these patterns and adopts new alternatives. As Greens, we will:

### **1. *Create Strong Regional Planning Authorities***

We must adopt a regional approach to land-use and transportation planning. Regional planning authorities must be established that have the authority to require counties to comply with regional plans. In general, new road construction should be a last resort. Prohibit new road capacity in air polluted counties which are deemed non-attainment areas.

### **2. *Oppose the Building of Atlanta's "Second Perimeter"***

Common sense tells us that the building of yet another perimeter around Atlanta will re-visit and compound all the problems of sprawl, pollution and gridlock associated with the first perimeter. Numerous studies support that assumption. Plans for the Second Perimeter must be scrapped. Instead, HOV lanes must be expanded using existing lanes, and enforcement of appropriate HOV lane use must be increased. Traffic laws that protect the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists should also be strengthened and enforced.

### **3. *Re-Establish Mixed-Use Zoning***

Develop communities that put housing, workplaces and shopping all within walking and bicycling distance. This is the traditional model of development, and besides creating less dependence on the automobile (and therefore less gridlock, and less smog), it also creates an increased sense of community, and safer streets.

### **4. *Oppose Giant Box Stores and Regional Shopping Centers***

The sheer scale of Mega stores and malls forces people to drive to shop, brings strangers into communities, and creates more opportunities for crime. At the same time, the trend of building ever newer and larger stores leads to abandonment of older facilities, empty shops and blight. We will oppose this trend in favor of revitalizing existing shopping centers.

### **5. *Make Communities Bike and Pedestrian-Friendly***

Biking and walking in many areas of Georgia is currently a dangerous proposition. We need to encourage walking and bicycling by building more bike paths and pedestrian walks. Building residential, working and shopping areas in closer proximity will also help.

6. ***Aggressively Develop Mass Transit***

Developing public transit is cheaper than building more roads and bridges. Public transportation that is effective, accessible, and desirable is a working reality in other metropolitan areas, and only requires political vision and will.

7. ***Free the State Motor Fuel Tax***

Current state law requires that all revenues from the state motor fuel tax be spent on the creation of more roads -- which will of course create more automobile use, which will create more fuel tax funds. Talk about a vicious cycle! We need to amend the Georgia Constitution to make motor fuel tax funds available for all transportation projects --including public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle walkways; and transportation programs that serve the elderly and handicapped.

8. ***Create High-Density Housing***

When we're not surrounded by freeways and six-lane roads, living next to parks and shopping becomes very desirable. High-density housing must be encouraged near shopping and industrial centers. Rather than zoning for minimum lot sizes, zoning should encourage minimum densities (that are still human scale) that will shorten walking distances and protect surrounding open spaces. In addition, mixed income housing should be built to foster a sense of community.

9. ***Conservation Land Trusts***

We encourage the formation of conservation land trusts whose dual goals are land preservation and affordable energy-efficient housing. We support a holistic approach to sustainable development which combines environmental, economic, and community needs. Greenspace should be protected with conservation easements and transferrable development rights (TDR's), which will remove high assessments on the potential development value of farmland and forests. We encourage preservation of urban areas through rehabilitative reuse of existing structures, historic district designations and tree protection ordinances.

## VETERANS

*We owe military veterans a future where our children no longer face war.*

We recognize the tremendous sacrifice our country has asked of its citizens who have served in the military in the conduct of war. While we frequently find ourselves and our commitment to non-violence at odds with the military adventurism of the U.S. federal policies, we stand with the Georgians who have served in these wars and insist that they and their families not be abandoned.

### **1. *Our Commitment to a Future Beyond Wars***

Our first priority in foreign policy considerations is creating a future without war -- and consequently without war veterans. We are committed that future generations not face the separations and sacrifices of war.

### **2. *Honor our Commitment to Veterans.***

We insist that the cuts to Veterans Administration funding be halted and that past cuts be restored. We must honor the promises we've made to veterans in the past.

### **3. *Gulf War Syndrome***

Many of those U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen who served during Operation Desert Storm in the Arab East have been exposed to nuclear, chemical and possibly biological warfare agents. We insist that the Veterans Administration not ignore the suffering they have experienced since coming home from the war. The Congress should fund and the VA should implement a comprehensive program to survey Gulf Vets and the impacts of Gulf War Syndrome on them and their families and to provide the best possible medical treatment available to minimize the suffering of these men and women and their families. We insist that the Federal Government withdraw from deployment Depleted Uranium, nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. We insist that the military halt the practice of testing experimental medicines and inoculations on service members without their consent.