

# ACCOUNTABLE

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Making America as Good  
as Its Promise

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with

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# **ACCOUNTABLE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (Chapter 1)**

The most powerful tool we have as citizens to effect change is our vote. We should not allow our elected officials to make promises in their campaigns without fulfilling their obligations once in office. Use this list to hold our new president accountable on health care.

## **Campaign Promises 2008: Health Care**

### **BARACK OBAMA AS PROMISED . . .**

- Will make a new national health care plan available to all Americans with guaranteed eligibility; comprehensive benefits; affordable premiums, co-pays, and deductibles; simplified paperwork; easy enrollment; increased portability; and choice.
- Will provide tax relief for small business.
- Will create a Small Business Health Tax Credit to assist small businesses in providing employee health care.
- Will mandate health coverage for children.
- Will help patients by improving disease management programs and increasing transparency in health costs.
- Will lower costs by increasing competition in the insurance and drug markets.

Use this checklist to evaluate whether the entities that can make a difference are doing all that they can to help America realize the goal of the first Covenant: "Securing the Right to Health care and Well-Being." Reexamine this checklist every six months to assess progress.

## **OUR PRESIDENT**

- ☐ Have you made implementation of a health care plan a priority within the first 100 days of your administration?
- ☐ Have you exercised good judgment, reached out to a broad number of constituencies who will be affected by health care reform, and engaged in transparent dealings that will strengthen the chances that implementation of reform will succeed?
- ☐ Have you retained the ability to oversee the new reforms, ensuring that neither private nor public entities behave unfairly or unethically?
- ☐ Have you provided for unbiased entities to evaluate the success of the new reforms at regular intervals to determine if benchmarks have been met?

## **OUR U.S. CONGRESSMEN AND CONGRESSWOMEN**

- ☐ Have you made health care reform a priority issue?
- ☐ Are you using monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that insurance companies, doctors, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, and all entities in the health care system act in good faith and do not violate federal or ethical standards?
- ☐ Have you voted to expand health care coverage for children?
- ☐ Are you working to make health insurance more affordable for all Americans?

## **OUR GOVERNOR AND STATE LEGISLATORS**

- ☐ Have you shown leadership on health care reform even where the federal government may be lacking?
- ☐ Do you have a plan to fill in gaps in health care coverage created by a federal plan?
- ☐ Can you implement that plan if necessary?
- ☐ Do you have an enforcement mechanism to ensure that insurance companies, doctors, hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, and all entities in the health care system always act in good faith and do not violate state, federal, or ethical standards?

## **OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to monitor the political progress of health care reform promises made by our governmental leaders and to advocate when necessary?
- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to educate your members about the progress of health care reform and about the availability of health care options in our community?
- ☐ Have you educated your members about health, nutrition, screenings, and risk factors for degenerative diseases such as diabetes, cancer, hypertension, and heart disease?
- ☐ Do you implement programs to improve the health of your community members, such as disease screenings, blood pressure checks, or fitness initiatives?

## **YOU AND I**

- ☐ Do I eat a healthy diet?
- ☐ Do I exercise regularly?
- ☐ Do I know where the health facilities in my community are and what services they offer?
- ☐ Do I have a primary physician whom I see at least once a year?
- ☐ Do I see myself as the best advocate for my own health?
- ☐ Do I understand the importance of cancer, HIV/AIDS, and other health screenings, and undergo the appropriate tests at the recommended intervals as determined with my doctor?
- ☐ Do I talk to my family, neighbors, children, friends, and community members about important health issues—insurance coverage, access to services, and making health care affordable for all Americans?
- ☐ Do I talk to my family, neighbors, children, friends, and community members about maintaining a healthy lifestyle, such as the value of eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and seeing a physician at least once a year?

# **ACCOUNTABLE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (Chapter 2)**

The most powerful tool we have as citizens to effect change is our vote. We should not allow our elected officials to make promises in their campaigns without fulfilling their obligations once in office. Use this list to hold our new president accountable on education.

## **Campaign Promises 2008: Education**

### **BARACK OBAMA AS PROMISED . . .**

- Will invest 10 billion dollars in a “Zero to Five” plan to provide critical support to young children and their parents to get children ready for kindergarten.
- Will reform No Child Left Behind by providing the necessary funding for the law and improve assessments to track student progress and improve student learning in an individualized manner.
- Will improve No Child Left Behind’s accountability system so that we are supporting and not punishing schools in need of improvement.
- Will address the dropout crisis by drafting legislation to provide school districts with funding to invest in intervention strategies in middle school.
- Will expand high-quality, after-school activities by doubling federal funding and thus serving one million more children.
- Will recruit new teachers by creating Teacher Service Scholarships that will cover four years of undergraduate or two years of graduate teacher education.
- Will reward teachers by promoting new and innovative ways to increase teacher pay that are developed with teachers, not imposed on them.

Use this checklist to evaluate whether the entities that can make a difference are doing all that they can to help America realize the goal of the second Covenant: “Establishing a System of Public Education in Which All Children Achieve at High Levels and Reach Their Full Potential.” This chapter also promotes the 10th Covenant: “Closing the Racial Digital Divide.” Reexamine this checklist every six months to assess progress.

#### **OUR PRESIDENT**

- ☐ Have you made implementation of your education plan a priority within the first 100 days of the new administration?
- ☐ Have you worked to expand the measures by which schools and school districts are evaluated, examining not just testing data, but also special education programs, graduation and dropout rates, attendance rates, and other measures of student achievement?
- ☐ Have you improved the funding of educational programs to make No Child Left Behind possible?
- ☐ Are you investing in our schools to help all groups of children learn and be held to high standards?
- ☐ Have you provided for unbiased entities to evaluate the success of the new reforms at regular intervals to determine if benchmarks are being met?
- ☐ Did you assemble a team of experts on education to help make informed decisions about education policy?
- ☐ Have you provided support to early childhood education?
- ☐ Are you addressing the digital divide by improving access to the Internet and improving technology in our schools and communities?

#### **OUR U.S. CONGRESSMEN AND CONGRESSWOMEN**

- ☐ Is education reform a priority issue for you?
- ☐ Have you made early education a priority by expanding and supporting preschool programs?
- ☐ Do you support the inclusion of social studies, music, and art in the curriculum?

- ☐ Is funding early education, teacher training, and higher education programs a priority?
- ☐ Will you introduce or support initiatives to institute merit-based teacher pay?
- ☐ Do you support the development of charter schools, locally and nationally?
- ☐ Will you support funding for programs to bring more computers into homes and schools?

#### **OUR GOVERNOR AND STATE LEGISLATORS**

- ☐ Are you showing leadership in education reform, even where the federal government may be lacking?
- ☐ Do you have a plan to fill in gaps in education coverage where the federal government is remiss?
- ☐ Do you support reforms that help all students, especially those traditionally disadvantaged, to achieve and meet high standards?
- ☐ Do you have a testing program that holds our state to high standards in comparison with the rest of the nation?
- ☐ Have you worked to equalize funding through the school districts in our state?
- ☐ Have you tried to bring affordable, high-speed Internet access to your constituents?

#### **OUR LOCAL LEADERS**

- ☐ Do you have a plan to attract, hire, and retain strong teachers?
- ☐ Have you worked with parent and teacher groups to understand the education issues facing our community?
- ☐ Have you organized programs to help educate parents about ways to support and assist with their children's learning?
- ☐ Will you help your constituents become comfortable with new technology by increasing funding for such programs in schools and community centers?

## **OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to monitor the political progress of education reform promises made by our governmental leaders and to advocate when necessary?
- ☐ Do you educate members about the progress of education reform and the availability of education options in this community?
- ☐ Do you help students achieve by organizing after-school or summer programs that provide enrichment and remediation for children?
- ☐ Have you helped people in our community participate in our local schools, through fund-raising, volunteering, and voting on educational issues?
- ☐ Do you work to educate parents on helping their children succeed?
- ☐ Do you help promote literacy in our community?
- ☐ Do you offer programs to help parents interact positively with teachers and school administrators?
- ☐ Do you offer additional programs to expose students to different opportunities, such as racial and ethnic history, college tours, vocational training, life lessons, character education, and problem-solving skills?

## **YOU AND I**

- ☐ Do I read more than I watch television?
- ☐ Do I read to my children?
- ☐ Do I have Internet access at home?
- ☐ Is my child at the appropriate reading and math levels for her or his age?
- ☐ Do I watch too much television at home? Do I allow my child to watch too much television or spend too much unsupervised time on the Internet?
- ☐ Do I monitor the music I allow my children to listen to and limit the amount of time they spend playing video games?
- ☐ Am I on a first-name basis with the principal of my child's school and his or her teachers?
- ☐ Do I regularly attend Parent-Teacher Association meetings?



- ☐ Do I know the children with whom my children are friends?
- ☐ Do I know the names of the parents of my children's friends and talk regularly with them about our children?
- ☐ Do I talk to my family, neighbors, children, friends, and community members about important education issues?
- ☐ Do I talk to my family, neighbors, children, friends, and community members about the value of education?
- ☐ Have I volunteered at a school in my community, whether through a career day, school event, or fund-raising activity?
- ☐ Am I aware of the different educational options for my child at every level of schooling?
- ☐ Do I attend parent-teacher conferences each semester and always discuss my child's progress with him or her?
- ☐ Can I advocate for my child if he or she needs extra services, such as tutoring, enrichment, or special education services?
- ☐ Do I know the skills and materials my child is responsible for this year and educate myself about those topics so that I can help support my child?
- ☐ Do I check my child's homework every night?
- ☐ If I am not a parent, do I support children in my family or community by providing advice, positive reinforcement, and a strong role model?
- ☐ Do I insist that teachers and administrators establish classroom environments that promote excellence for every child?

## **ACCOUNTABLE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (Chapter 3)**

The most powerful tool we have as citizens to effect change is our vote. We should not allow our elected officials to make promises during their campaigns without fulfilling their obligations once in office. Use this list to hold our new president accountable on correcting our unequal system of justice.

### **Campaign Promises 2008: Unequal Justice**

#### **BARACK OBAMA AS PROMISED . . .**

- Will ban racial profiling by federal law enforcement agencies and provide federal incentives to state and local police departments to prohibit the practice.
- Will reduce crime recidivism by providing ex-offender support such as job training, and substance abuse and mental health services.
- Will eliminate sentencing disparities between crack and powder-based cocaine.
- Will use drug courts to give first-time, nonviolent offenders a chance to serve their sentence, where appropriate, in the type of drug rehabilitation programs that have proven to work better than a prison term in changing bad behavior.
- Supports capital punishment for only the worst crimes.

Use this checklist to evaluate whether the entities that can make a difference are doing all that they can to help America realize the goal of the third and fourth Covenants, “Correcting the System of Unequal Justice” and “Fostering Accountable Community-Centered Policing.” Reexamine this checklist every six months to assess progress.

## **OUR PRESIDENT**

- ☐ Have you made implementation of a plan to eliminate racial profiling a priority?
- ☐ Have you exercised good judgment in decision making regarding the scope of capital punishment?
- ☐ Have you sought to examine and reform racial disparities in sentencing laws?
- ☐ Have you provided federal support to state and local entities in creating innovative solutions to reduce crime?
- ☐ Have you provided for unbiased entities to regularly evaluate the success of the new reforms to determine if benchmarks are being met?
- ☐ Have you created programs to prevent recidivism in the federal criminal justice system?

## **OUR U.S. CONGRESSMEN AND CONGRESSWOMEN**

- ☐ Have you supported or introduced legislation designed to reduce racial disparities in the criminal justice system, such as racial profiling and sentencing disparities?
- ☐ Have you examined the problems facing our state or district so that you can advocate for practical solutions regarding criminal justice?
- ☐ Have you introduced legislation that reduces sentencing disparities along racial and ethnic lines?

## **OUR GOVERNOR AND STATE LEGISLATORS**

- ☐ Have you created programs to prevent recidivism in the state criminal justice system?
- ☐ Do you have a plan to address the specific problems of crime and justice facing our state?
- ☐ Have you investigated and implemented new technologies to allow public safety personnel to be more effective in fighting and preventing crime?
- ☐ Do you support state and local law enforcement in mandating high standards for officer conduct and fair treatment for all people?
- ☐ Do you mandate that local and state officials meet with community members to discuss issues and challenges of the criminal justice system facing local communities and the state as a whole?

## **OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

- ☐ Have you researched the criminal justice issues facing your community?
- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to educate your members on both preventing crime and ensuring a system of equal justice?
- ☐ Have you educated your members on the dangers and consequences of a criminal conviction?
- ☐ Has your organization created a plan to help prevent crime in your community?
- ☐ Have you organized meetings with local and state law enforcement officials to discuss problems and work together to craft solutions to issues of criminal justice?

## **YOU AND I**

- ☐ Do I educate myself about the events occurring in my community regarding crime?
- ☐ Do I talk to my friends, family, children, and neighbors about these issues and events?
- ☐ Do I know how the criminal justice system in my community, state, and nation functions?
- ☐ Have I ever visited a courthouse or jail in my community?
- ☐ Do I talk to my children about how to deal with an encounter with any law enforcement official?
- ☐ Do I know where and how to report police misconduct if it should occur?
- ☐ Do I attend community meetings about issues related to crime and criminal justice?
- ☐ Do I know how to find out what the law is in my community?
- ☐ Do I know if my community has free legal services available to residents?
- ☐ Have I taught my children about doing the right thing and obeying the law?

# **ACCOUNTABLE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (Chapter 4)**

The most powerful tool we have as citizens to effect change is our vote. We should not allow our elected officials to make promises during their campaigns without fulfilling their obligations once in office. Use this list to hold our new president accountable on the economy.

## **Campaign Promises 2008: The Economy**

### **BARACK OBAMA AS PROMISED . . .**

- Will support a \$50 billion emergency economic stimulus plan to create 1 million jobs for rebuilding infrastructure and schools and helping local governments avoid budget cuts.
- Will provide \$10 billion in relief to state and local governments hardest hit by the housing crisis to ensure continuity of vital services.
- Will introduce new legislation that would give families the option of withdrawing as much as 15 percent of their retirement savings—up to a maximum of \$10,000—without facing a tax penalty this year or next.
- Will increase regulations, oversight, and disclosure requirements for financial institutions.
- Will cut taxes for middle-class Americans.
- Will invest in next-generation technologies in manufacturing and industry to create 5 million new “green” jobs for Americans.
- Will raise the minimum wage to a “living wage” for American workers.
- Will create a rating system and a credit card bill of rights to attack predatory credit card practices.

Use this checklist to evaluate whether the entities that can make a difference are doing all they can to help America realize the goal of the seventh and eighth Covenants: “Strengthening Our Rural Roots” and “Accessing Good Jobs, Wealth, and Economic Prosperity.” Reexamine this checklist every six months to assess progress.

#### **OUR PRESIDENT**

- ☐ Have you made the implementation of your economic plan a priority within the first 100 days of the new administration?
- ☐ Have you addressed pressing financial issues, both for individuals and for financial institutions?
- ☐ Are you implementing your planned tax reform as promised during your campaign?
- ☐ Have you implemented new regulations to increase accountability and transparency in the financial sector?
- ☐ Have you assembled a team of experts on economics to help you make informed decisions about economic policy?

#### **OUR U.S. CONGRESSMEN AND CONGRESSWOMEN**

- ☐ Have you made economic reform a priority issue?
- ☐ Have you used your vote to promote sound fiscal policy?
- ☐ Have you considered the interests of your constituents in making economic decisions?
- ☐ Are you addressing long-term and short-term problems facing the nation?

#### **OUR GOVERNOR AND STATE LEGISLATORS**

- ☐ Have you shown leadership on economic reform even where the federal government may be found wanting?
- ☐ Do you have a plan to fill in gaps in economic reform that the federal government may have overlooked?
- ☐ Are you addressing those communities most affected by recent economic crises?

- ☐ Are you working to attract and retain strong and stable businesses in our community?
- ☐ Have you worked with labor and other local groups to understand the economic issues facing our community?
- ☐ Have you worked with local leaders to develop programs to help educate citizens about ways to support and assist with improving the economic situation?

#### **OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to monitor the political progress of economic reform policies and promises made by our governmental leaders and to advocate when necessary?
- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to educate members about the progress of economic reform and on the availability of education options in our community?
- ☐ Do you help people in our community participate in our local economic reform, through awareness raising, volunteering, and voting on economic issues?
- ☐ Do you educate members about how to manage their personal resources?
- ☐ Have you worked to promote financial literacy in our community?
- ☐ Do you offer additional programs to expose members to different economic opportunities, such as investment clubs, vocational training, and job opportunities?
- ☐ Do you help people in our community understand basic economics?

#### **YOU AND I**

- ☐ Do I read the business section of my newspaper?
- ☐ Do I prepare a monthly budget and stick to it?
- ☐ Do I monitor my credit rating at least once every six months?
- ☐ Do I work toward eliminating debt?
- ☐ Do I pay my bills in a timely and consistent fashion?

- Do I have a savings account and dedicate \_\_\_ percent of my earnings to it monthly?
- Do I talk to my family, neighbors, children, friends, and community members about important economic issues?
- Do I talk to my family, neighbors, friends, children, and community members about the value of understanding the economy and how it affects us?



# **ACCOUNTABLE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (Chapter 5)**

The most powerful tool we have as citizens to effect change is our vote. We should not allow our elected officials to make promises during their campaigns without fulfilling their obligations once in office. Use this list to hold our new president accountable on the environment.

## **Campaign Promises 2008: The Environment, Energy, and Infrastructure**

### **BARACK OBAMA AS PROMISED . . .**

- Will invest \$150 billion over 10 years to spur private efforts toward clean energy, in the process creating 5 million green-collar jobs.
- Will ensure 10 percent of our electricity comes from renewable sources by 2012, and 25 percent by 2025.
- Will implement an economy-wide, cap-and-trade program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80 percent by 2050.
- Will enact a windfall profits tax to provide a \$1,000 emergency energy rebate to American families.
- Will consider lifting oil-drilling bans in some offshore federal waters as part of a broader energy package.
- Will eliminate our current imports from the Middle East and Venezuela within 10 years.
- Will require all utilities to produce at least 10 percent of their electricity from renewable energy such as wind, solar, or biomass.
- Will overhaul appliance and other energy-efficiency standards with the goal of reducing building energy use by 25 to 50 percent.

Use this checklist to evaluate whether the entities that can make a difference are doing all that they can to help America realize the goal of the fifth and ninth Covenants: “Ensuring Broad Access to Affordable Neighborhoods That Connect to Opportunity” and “Assuring Environmental Justice for All.” Reexamine this checklist every six months to assess progress.

#### **OUR PRESIDENT**

- ☐ Have you made environmental policies a priority during your first 100 days in office?
- ☐ Did you assemble a team of experts on environmental, climate, and infrastructure issues to consider short-term and long-term decision making?
- ☐ Have you explored responsibly using domestic oil and natural gases?
- ☐ Have you provided leadership in the international community on making climate change and environmental issues global priorities?
- ☐ Are you helping states and local communities to update their infrastructure?
- ☐ Will you make exploring and implementing “green” energy sources a national priority?

#### **OUR U.S. CONGRESSMEN AND CONGRESSWOMEN**

- ☐ Have you proposed legislation to explore alternative energy sources?
- ☐ Have you brought the concerns of citizens struggling with rising fuel costs to Congress?
- ☐ Have you supported aggressive goals for reducing greenhouse emissions?
- ☐ Do you know whether plans have been discussed or implemented by Congress to deal with emergencies such as Hurricane Katrina?

#### **OUR GOVERNOR AND STATE LEGISLATORS**

- ☐ Have you worked to strengthen our state’s infrastructure, such as roads and bridges?
- ☐ Do you have a plan for providing citizens with incentives to reduce energy consumption?

- ☐ Have you improved local and state public transportation options?
- ☐ Have you worked to provide consumers and business owners relief from rising fuel prices?
- ☐ Do you have a plan to deal with a weather emergency such as Hurricane Katrina?

#### **OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

- ☐ Have you offered members education about important environmental issues and how they may affect future generations?
- ☐ Will you promote small solutions to the energy crisis, such as ride sharing or energy-efficient light bulbs?
- ☐ Have you investigated or pushed government leaders to investigate areas of weak infrastructure in our community?
- ☐ Have you led local efforts to promote recycling?

#### **YOU AND I**

- ☐ Do I understand the issue of global climate change and how it will affect our world?
- ☐ Do I recycle at home and at work?
- ☐ Do I use public transportation and reduce driving to save money and help the environment?
- ☐ Do I use energy-efficient light bulbs?
- ☐ Do I own a hybrid or energy-efficient car?
- ☐ Do I sometimes ride a bike?
- ☐ Do I talk to neighbors, family, children, and friends about the importance of environmental issues?

# **ACCOUNTABLE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (Chapter 6)**

The most powerful tool we have as citizens to effect change is our vote. We should not allow our elected officials to make promises during their campaigns without fulfilling their obligations once in office. Use this list to hold our new president accountable.

## **Campaign Promises 2008: Democracy**

### **BARACK OBAMA AS PROMISED . . .**

- Will establish harsh penalties for those who have engaged in voter fraud and provide voters who have been misinformed with accurate and full information so they can vote.
- Will create a database with lobbyist reports, ethics records, and campaign finance filings to enhance transparency.
- Will create an independent entity responsible for overseeing ethics investigations.
- Will expose, then eliminate, pork barrel spending.
- Will require federal agencies to work in public so citizens can understand and participate in their decision making.

Use this checklist to evaluate whether the entities that can make a difference are doing all they can to help America realize the goal of the sixth Covenant: "Claiming Our Democracy." Reexamine this checklist every six months to assess progress.

## **OUR PRESIDENT**

- ☐ Can you put the best interests of the country first regardless of partisan politics or political pressure?
- ☐ Are you developing and enforcing laws that prevent unfair campaign funding?
- ☐ Are you ensuring citizens are allowed to exercise their votes freely and fairly?
- ☐ Have you implemented policies to ensure up-to-date voting equipment so that elections reflect the people's choice?
- ☐ Are you including a variety of viewpoints in your Cabinet, including some from outside the Democratic Party?

## **OUR U.S. CONGRESSMEN AND CONGRESSWOMEN**

- ☐ Are you working to achieve campaign finance reform?
- ☐ Have you proposed or supported legislation to ensure that all citizens have access to the polls on Election Day?
- ☐ Have you “reached across the aisle” to work with members of other political factions when it benefited your constituents?

## **OUR GOVERNOR AND STATE LEGISLATORS**

- ☐ Have you ensured that our state has up-to-date equipment to tally and count all votes correctly?
- ☐ Are you ensuring that polling places are managed fairly so that all citizens can participate in the democratic process?
- ☐ Are you representing the interests of your constituents rather than those of powerful lobbyists?
- ☐ Have you implemented campaign finance reforms in our state?

## **OUR LOCAL LEADERS**

- ☐ Are you working with state and national officials to ensure fair electoral processes?
- ☐ Do you make decisions based on the best interests of our community, not on those of special interest groups?
- ☐ Have you organized or will you organize programs to educate and encourage citizens about their voting rights?

## **OUR COMMUNITY LEADERS AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS**

- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to monitor the progress of the democratic process, ensuring fair elections and political decision making?
- ☐ Do you have a plan or an initiative to educate your members about why voting is important and how to register?
- ☐ Have you worked with local government to manage fair polling places on Election Day?
- ☐ Do you educate members about the responsibilities of citizens?
- ☐ Will you help residents seeking citizenship in navigating the citizenship process?
- ☐ Will you educate young people about the importance of participating in our democracy?

## **YOU AND I**

- ☐ Do I know the names of my elected officials?
- ☐ If possible, am I registered to vote?
- ☐ If possible, do I vote, even if voting requires obtaining an absentee ballot?
- ☐ Do I talk to my friends, family, children, and neighbors about the importance of voting?
- ☐ Do I educate myself about issues that matter to me and my community so that I can make an informed choice at the polls?
- ☐ Do I engage in honest discussion with others about the pluses and minuses of political issues and individual politicians and find ways to compromise?
- ☐ Have I volunteered to help my democracy through participating in a voter registration drive, helping those in my community to register, providing rides to the polls on Election Day, or helping to educate others about the importance of civic engagement?
- ☐ Have I served as a poll worker?

## DISENFRANCHISED FELONS BY STATE

State	Total Felons	Voting Age Population	Disenfranchisement Rate
Alabama	250,046	3,392,779	7.37%
Alaska	11,132	459,529	2.42%
Arizona	176,103	4,051,499	4.34%
Arkansas	57,691	2,043,701	2.82%
California	283,124	26,064,483	1.09%
Colorado	28,636	3,397,937	0.84%
Connecticut	22,854	2,647,997	0.86%
Delaware	46,677	618,649	7.54%
District of Columbia	730	454,981	0.16%
Florida	1,179,687	13,094,945	9.01%
Georgia	283,607	6,387,956	4.44%
Hawaii	6,530	960,466	0.68%
Idaho	17,416	994,305	1.75%
Illinois	45,825	9,422,938	0.49%
Indiana	26,245	4,591,742	0.57%
Iowa	121,418	2,250,634	5.39%
Kansas	27,863	2,028,426	1.37%
Kentucky	186,348	3,123,645	5.97%
Louisiana	98,190	3,318,779	2.96%
Maine	-	1,018,982	0.00%
Maryland	111,521	4,130,817	2.70%
Massachusetts	10,140	4,946,304	0.20%
Michigan	49,788	7,541,065	0.66%
Minnesota	38,784	3,810,605	1.02%
Mississippi	146,155	2,120,013	6.89%
Missouri	93,752	4,297,142	2.18%
Montana	4,145	701,847	0.59%
Nebraska	61,996	1,298,451	4.77%
Nevada	43,594	1,659,757	2.63%
New Hampshire	2,587	981,456	0.26%
New Jersey	127,178	6,506,779	1.95%
New Mexico	18,080	1,372,580	1.32%
New York	122,018	14,657,367	0.83%



North Carolina	73,113	6,319,805	1.16%
North Dakota	1,466	487,010	0.30%
Ohio	45,487	8,620,509	0.53%
Oklahoma	49,541	2,633,289	1.88%
Oregon	14,228	2,710,424	0.52%
Pennsylvania	41,626	9,534,761	0.44%
Rhode Island	20,793	832,115	2.50%
South Carolina	48,523	3,123,648	1.55%
South Dakota	3,271	568,883	0.58%
Tennessee	94,258	4,447,269	2.12%
Texas	522,887	15,878,347	3.29%
Utah	5,970	1,608,540	0.37%
Vermont	-	481,661	0.00%
Virginia	377,847	5,587,563	6.76%
Washington	167,316	4,634,864	3.61%
West Virginia	10,800	1,419,453	0.76%
Wisconsin	62,342	4,139,405	1.51%
Wyoming	20,198	380,169	5.31%
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>5,259,350</b>	<b>217,766,271</b>	<b>2.42%</b>

# Promises, Promises . . .

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## The *ACCOUNTABLE* Report Card

It is the job of politicians to make promises, but it is the job of the people who elect them to make sure they keep them. Presidential election seasons are the times in our politics when most promises are made. This was certainly the case in the run-up to the 2008 election, especially given the many crises our country continues to face.

That said, what follows are a series of easy-to-use charts that detail the promises made by President Barack Obama.

We hope these charts, in conjunction with the Frameworks for Assessment at the end of each chapter, will motivate all who read them to track the progress of the president's vision for our future.

Presidents alone do not shape our future. Congress and the courts can pass laws and hand down decisions that chip away at any president's promises. Nonetheless, citizens must always be prepared to hold the president accountable on what he (perhaps one day, she!) promised he'd fight for.

Never forget, we, the people, are *accountable* for making sure that promises made are promises kept.

## HEALTH

“[M]y health care proposal will ask hospitals and providers to collect, track, and publicly report measures of health care quality. We’ll provide the public with information about preventable medical errors, nurse-to-patient ratios, and hospital-acquired infections.”

### Health Insurance

*Without health insurance, my kids and I won’t be able to afford the care we need. How will an Obama administration help us?*

**PROVIDE UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE.** “And we need to finally pass universal health care so that every American has access to health insurance that they can afford, and our getting the preventive services that are the key to cutting health care costs. That’s what I pledge to do in my first term as president.” “I’ll pass a universal health care bill that cuts a typical family’s premiums by up to \$2,500. And mark my words—I will sign this bill by the end of my first term as president.”

**MAKE INSURANCE AVAILABLE TO ALL WHO SEEK TO PURCHASE IT.** “If you are one of the 45 million Americans who don’t have health insurance, you will have it after this plan becomes law. No one will be turned away because of a preexisting condition or illness. Everyone will be able to buy into a new health insurance plan that’s similar to the one that every federal employee . . . currently has for themselves. It will cover all essential medical services, including preventive, maternity, disease management, and mental health care. And it will also include high standards for quality and efficiency.”

**OFFER SUBSIDIES FOR THE UNINSURED.** “If you cannot afford this insurance, you will receive a subsidy to pay for it. If you have children, they will be covered. If you change jobs, your insurance will go with you. If you need to see a doctor, you will not have to wait in long lines for one.”

**SUPPORT THE ALREADY-INSURED.** Under Obama’s plan, “if you like your current health insurance, nothing changes, except your costs will go down by as much as \$2,500 per year.”

**EXPAND EXISTING PLANS.** Obama will “expand eligibility for the SCHIP and Medicaid programs and ensure that these programs continue to serve their critical safety-net function.”

**FOCUS ON PREVENTION.** “Under my plan, we’ll make sure insurance companies cover evidence-based, preventive care services—weight loss programs, smoking-cessation programs, and other efforts—to help people avoid costly, debilitating health problems in the first place.”

**ESTABLISH A NATIONAL EXCHANGE.** “Establish a National Health Insurance Exchange with a range of private insurance options as well as a new public plan based on benefits available to members of Congress that will allow individuals and small businesses to buy affordable health coverage.” “The Exchange will feature comprehensive benefits; affordable premiums, co-pays and deductibles, simplified paperwork, easy enrollment, and portability.”

**MANDATE PAYROLL CONTRIBUTIONS.** “Make employer contributions more fair by requiring large employers that do not offer coverage or make a meaningful contribution to the cost of quality health coverage for their employees to contribute a percentage of payroll toward the costs of their employees’ health care.”

**MAKE CHILD COVERAGE MANDATORY.** Obama “will require that all children have health care coverage.”

**SUPPORT MALPRACTICE INSURANCE.** Obama will “strengthen antitrust laws to prevent insurers from overcharging physicians for their malpractice insurance.”

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### Catastrophic Illness

*My Mom is more than sick—she has a chronic, terminal illness. How will President Obama help her pay the bills?*

PAY FOR WORST ILLNESSES. “[W]e’ll reduce costs for businesses and their workers by picking up the tab for some of the most expensive illnesses. Right now, the five percent of patients with the most serious illnesses like cancer and heart disease account for nearly fifty percent of health care costs. Insurance companies devote the lion’s share of their expenses to these patients, and then pass the cost on to the rest of us in the form of higher premiums. Under my plan, the federal government will pay for part of these catastrophic cases, which means that your premiums will go down.”

REFORM BANKRUPTCY LAWS TO PROTECT FAMILIES FACING A MEDICAL CRISIS. “We have to release people who are in bankruptcy as a consequence of health care. We’ve got to give them a break.” Obama “will create an exemption in bankruptcy law for individuals who can prove they filed for bankruptcy because of medical expenses. This exemption will create a process that forgives the debt and lets the individuals get back on their feet.”

END CHERRY-PICKING. “Insurance companies spend \$50 billion a year on elaborate efforts to cherry-pick the healthiest patients and avoid covering everyone else. I intend to save them a whole lot of time and money by putting an end to this practice once and for all.”

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### Research Funding

*How will an Obama administration advance medical science through research?*

**LIFT BAN ON STEM CELL RESEARCH.** “I will lift the current administration’s ban on federal funding of research on embryonic stem-cell lines created after 9 August 2001 through executive order, and I will ensure that all research on stem cells is conducted ethically and with rigorous oversight.”

**SUPPORT STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT.** “I am a proud supporter of the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. The president was wrong to veto it, and I will make sure that it is finally signed into law when I’m president.”

**FUND DISEASE MANAGEMENT RESEARCH.** “I will encourage the development of biological markers of disease that might simplify the evaluation of new therapies, the use of genetic information to select patients most likely to benefit from new treatments, and the multidisciplinary efforts that are now possible at many research centers. In addition, I will support increased attention to research that focuses on prevention, early detection, and improved management of disease.”

## Global Public Health

*I hear a lot about the new “globalized economy,” but I get the sense that health issues, too, know no borders. How will President Obama protect our nation’s health, in the context of global health?*

**HELP ELIMINATE AIDS.** Obama pledged to “increase spending on global HIV/AIDS to \$50 billion between 2009 and 2013, while at the same time increasing overall foreign assistance spending to \$50 billion annually.”

**FIGHT AGAINST DISEASE USED AS A WEAPON.** “I will work with the international community to make any use of disease as a weapon declared a crime against humanity.”

**COLLABORATE IN GLOBAL RESEARCH.** “I will also encourage research collaboration in areas where multinational investments are essential, such as medical research on malaria and other diseases. These programs will be fully funded as a part of my strong commitment to double basic research budgets.”

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### Lowering Costs

*How will President Obama ensure that patients get the best bang for their buck?*

**PERMIT GENERIC IMPORTS.** Obama promised to “lower drug costs by allowing the importation of safe medicines from other developed countries, increasing the use of generic drugs in public programs, and taking on drug companies that block cheaper generic medicines from the market.”

**CONVERT PAPER RECORDS TO ELECTRONIC RECORDS.** Obama will “invest \$10 billion a year over the next five years to move the U.S. health care system to broad adoption of standards-based electronic health information systems, including electronic health records.”

**REQUIRE THAT PLANS USE PROVEN METHODS.** Obama will “require that plans that participate in the new public plan, Medicare, or the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) utilize proven disease management programs. This will improve quality of care and lower costs as well.”

**ALLOW DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION.** Obama will “repeal the ban on direct negotiation with drug companies and use the resulting savings, which could be as high as \$30 billion, to further invest in improving health care coverage and quality.”

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### Informing Patients

*While I’m no medical expert, I believe that knowledge is power. How will an Obama administration encourage transparency among health care providers?*

**ESTABLISH INSTITUTE ON COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS.** Obama will “establish an independent institute to guide reviews and research on comparative effectiveness, so that Americans and their doctors will have accurate and objective information to make the best decisions for their health and well-being.”

**PUBLICIZE HEALTH DATA.** Obama will “require hospitals to collect and report health care cost and quality data. We’ll provide the public with information about preventable medical errors, nurse-to-patient ratios, and hospital-acquired infections.” “Health plans will be required to disclose the percentage of premiums that actually goes to paying for patient care as opposed to administrative costs.”

**PUBLICIZE DISPARITY DATA.** Obama will “challenge the medical system to eliminate inequities in health care by requiring hospitals and health plans to collect, analyze, and report health care quality for disparity populations and holding them accountable for any differences found: diversifying the workforce to ensure culturally effective care . . . and supporting and expanding the capacity of safety-net institutions, which provide a disproportionate amount of care for underserved populations with inadequate funding and technical resources.”

**PUBLICIZE MEDICAL ERRORS.** Obama “will require providers to report preventable medical errors and support hospital and physician practice improvement to prevent future errors.”

**SHARE PROFITS.** Obama will “prevent companies from abusing their monopoly power through unjustified price increases.” In markets where the insurance business is not competitive, his plan will “force insurers to pay out a reasonable share of their premiums for patient care instead of keeping exorbitant amounts for profits and administration.”

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## EDUCATION

“As president, I will lead a new era of accountability in education. But see, I don’t just want to hold our teachers accountable; I want to hold our government accountable.

I want you to hold me accountable. And that’s why every year I’m president, I will report back to you on the progress our schools are making because it’s time to stop passing the buck on education and start accepting responsibility. And that’s the kind of example I’ll set as President of the United States.”

### Supporting Parents

*President Obama has outlined his administration’s support for schools and students. What about parents?*

**CREATE PARENTS’ REPORT CARD.** “I’ll create a parents’ report card that will show you whether your kid is on the path to college.”

**EXPAND PAID MEDICAL LEAVE.** “I’ll expand the Family Medical Leave Act to include . . . millions more workers, to let parents participate in school activities with their kids. . . . [W]e’ll . . . put federal support behind state efforts to provide paid . . . [l]eave.”

**OFFER BETTER CHILD CARE.** Obama will “provide affordable and high-quality child care to ease the burden on working families.” The Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program provides critical support to low-income families to pay for child care. Obama “will reverse this policy and ensure that CCDBG remains adequately funded every year.” He will also “double the resources for quality within CCDBG to support efforts such as developing quality rating systems for child care that reflect higher standards and supports for teacher training and professional development.”

**EXPAND HOME VISITING PROGRAMS.** Obama will “expand . . . home visiting programs to all low-income, first-time mothers, [programs that have empirically] improved women’s prenatal health, . . . [reduced] childhood injuries, . . . increased maternal employment, and increased children’s school readiness. The . . . plan will assist . . . 570,000 first-time mothers each year.”

**PRESENT ANNUAL REPORT.** Obama will “make federal education programs more performance-based and report results to the public and Congress at least once a year.”

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### Affording College

*How will an Obama administration help me pay for college?*

**OFFER TAX CREDIT: \$4K FOR 100 HOURS.** “I want to give tax breaks to young people, in the form of an annual \$4,000 tax credit” that will be “available . . . at the time of enrollment by using prior year’s tax data to deliver the credit at the time that tuition is due.” “Recipients of this credit will be required to conduct 100 hours of public service a year.”

**PROVIDE 40,000 TEACHING SERVICE SCHOLARSHIPS: \$25K EACH.** These scholarships “cover four years of undergraduate or two years of graduate teacher education . . . for those who are willing to teach in a high-need field or location for at least four years.”

**FUND PELL GRANTS.** Obama will “ensure that the award keeps pace with the rising cost of college tuition.”

**FUND VETERANS.** “[F]or those who serve in our military, we’ll cover all of your tuition with an even more generous 21st Century GI Bill.”

**ELIMINATE FAFSA FORMS.** Obama will “streamline the financial aid process by eliminating the current federal financial aid application [FAFSA—Free Application for Federal Student Aid] and enabling families to apply simply by checking a box on their tax form, authorizing their tax information to be used, and eliminating the need for a separate application.”

**ELIMINATE FFEL PROGRAM.** Obama will “eliminate the FFEL [Federal Family Education Loan] program that provides wasteful subsidies to banks and mandate that all federal student loans be provided through the direct loan program.”

**CONSOLIDATE DIRECT LOAN PROGRAM.** “It’s really important that we revamp our college loan programs to free up more money for students. The direct loan program works extremely well—there doesn’t appear to be a need for these student loan programs to be managed through banks and other private lenders. If we consolidate programs under the Direct Loan program, we would save \$4.5 billion.”

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### Empowering Teachers

*How will President Obama help teachers help students?*

**MANDATE ACCREDITATION.** Obama will “require professional accreditation of all programs preparing teachers, with a focus on evidence regarding how well teachers are prepared.”

**TRACK TEACHERS’ PROGRESS.** “Colleges of education and alternative licensure programs will track their graduates’ entry and retention in teaching and their contributions to growth in student learning.”

**OFFER CHALLENGE GRANTS.** “Challenge grants will encourage the adoption of successful practices across the entire enterprise of teacher preparation.”

**REFORM TEACHER EDUCATION: \$100 MILLION.** Obama will “provide \$100 million to stimulate teacher education reforms built on school-university partnerships.”

**OFFER BONUSES.** “[W]e’ve got to provide bonuses for certain areas like math and science instruction where we just don’t have enough teachers as well as bonuses for teachers who are willing to teach in tough settings.”

**EXPAND TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAMS.** Obama will expand the number of Teacher Residency Programs, especially in math and science, by providing funding for 200 new programs serving an average of 150 candidates each year. The plan will annually “supply 30,000 exceptionally well-prepared recruits to high-need schools to provide long-term commitment and leadership in these districts.”

**SUPPORT CAREER LADDER INITIATIVE.** “[W]e’ve got to have career ladders for teachers, so that if they become nationally board-certified, if they’re learning new subject matter, if they are serving as a master teacher to help younger teachers, you know, that they get increased pay for those things that they’re doing.” The program “provide[s] federal resources to states and districts to leverage state efforts to create strong mentoring that supports beginning teachers. It will provide \$1 billion in funding for grants to create mentoring programs and reward veteran teachers for becoming mentors.”

**DEVELOP CLASSROOM CORPS.** Obama will establish a “Classroom Corps to help teachers and students, with a priority placed on high-need and underserved schools. The Corps will enlist retired or mid-career engineers and scientists to provide support for math and science teachers in the form of mentoring, student tutoring, curriculum development, and technology support. It will recruit neighborhood civic, business, and faith leaders to offer after-school programs and community service opportunities.”

**PROVIDE TEACHING SERVICE SCHOLARSHIPS.** Obama will “create substantial, sustained Teaching Service Scholarships that completely cover training costs in high-quality teacher preparation or alternative certification programs . . . for those who are willing to teach in a high-need field or location for at least four years. The scholarships will cover four years of undergraduate or two years of graduate teacher education, including programs for mid-career recruits in exchange for teaching for at least four years in a high-need field or location.”

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### Strengthening Our K-12 Schools

*How will President Obama ensure that all children have access to an excellent, 21st-century education?*

**EXTEND LEARNING TIME.** Longer school days or longer school years can help provide additional learning time for students to close the achievement gap. Obama will “create a \$200 million grant program for states and districts that want to provide additional learning time for students in need.”

**EXPAND SUMMER PROGRAMS.** Obama called for expanding summer programs “so young people have a place to do homework and are not on the street getting into trouble.”

**DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF CHARTER SCHOOLS.** “[A]s president, I’ll double the funding for responsible charter schools.”

**CREATE INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS FUND.** Obama will “create an Innovative Schools Fund to provide funds to states and school districts to implement plans to create a ‘portfolio’ of successful public school types, including charters, nonprofit schools, Montessori schools, career academies, and theme-focused schools.”

**FOSTER COLLABORATION.** Obama will “establish a competitive grant process open to existing or proposed public/private partnerships or entities that are pursuing evidence-based models that work—such as Diploma Plus or Teacher Advisor programs. These grants will decrease the dropout rate by increasing the capacity of state and district leaders as well as outside leaders—foundations, politicians, entrepreneurs, and community leaders—to collaborate on improving graduation rates.”

**BE WARY OF VOUCHERS.** “What I do oppose is using public money for private school vouchers. We need to focus on fixing and improving our public schools, not throwing our hands up and walking away from them.”

**IMPROVE STEM EDUCATION.** “I will support research to understand the strategies and mechanisms that bring lasting improvements to STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] education and ensure that promising practices are widely shared. This includes encouraging the development of cutting-edge STEM instructional materials and technologies, and working with educators to ensure that assessments measure the range of knowledge and skills needed for the 21st century. I will bring coherency to STEM education by increasing coordination of federal STEM education programs and facilitating cooperation among state efforts.”

**DOUBLE R&D FUNDING.** Obama promised to “double our investment in early education and educational R&D [Research and Development]” by the end of his first term in office. “Part of this investment will involve an R&D program for improving science education. This new program will build knowledge about strategies and mechanisms that can bring lasting improvements to science and math and technology education.”

**INVEST IN INTERVENTION STRATEGIES.** Obama will address the dropout crisis by pushing for his legislation “to provide funding to school districts to invest in intervention strategies in middle school—strategies such as personal academic plans, teaching teams, parent involvement, mentoring, intensive reading and math instruction, and extended learning time.”

**DOUBLE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS.** Obama will “double funding for the main federal support for after-school programs—the 21st Century Learning Centers program—to serve one million more children.”

**SUPPORT COLLEGE READINESS: AP CLASSES.** Obama will “create a national ‘Make College A Reality’ initiative that has a bold goal to increase students taking AP or college-level classes nationwide [to] 50 percent by 2016, and will build on [my] bipartisan proposal in the U.S. Senate to provide grants for students seeking college-level credit at community colleges if their school does not provide those resources.” “I’m calling for the creation of innovative—an Innovative Schools Fund. This fund will invest in schools like the Austin Polytechnical Institute, which is located in a part of Chicago that’s been hard hit by the decline in manufacturing over the past few decades. . . . That’s the kind of model we’ll replicate across the country when I’m President of the United States.”

**INVEST IN EARLY ASSESSMENT.** Obama will “provide \$25 million annually in matching funds for states to develop Early Assessment Programs. These funds will also promote state efforts to raise awareness about the availability of federal and state financial aid programs. . . . This program will increase college readiness and is voluntary.”

**INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY.** Obama will “build on existing federal education technology programs and create a \$500 million matching fund to ensure technology is fully integrated throughout schools.” He will also “create new technology-based curricula with leaders in the technology industry so schools can create courses around developing high-demand technology skills and working on authentic projects.”

**REFORM NCLB.** Obama pledged to “fix the failures of No Child Left Behind [NCLB] by providing the funding that was promised.” He will “reform NCLB, which starts by funding the law . . . [to] improve the assessments used to track student progress to measure readiness for college and the workplace, and improve student learning in a timely, individualized manner.” He will also “improve NCLB’s accountability system so that we are supporting schools that need improvement, rather than punishing them.”

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### Contributing to a College Education

*How will President Obama support colleges?*

**ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.** Obama will “create a Community College Partnership Program to strengthen community colleges by providing grants to (a) conduct more thorough analysis of the types of skills and technical education that are in high demand from students and local industry; (b) implement new associate of arts degree programs that cater to emerging industry and technical career demands; and (c) reward those institutions that graduate more students and also increase their numbers of transfer students to four-year institutions.”

**OFFER NOT JUST WORK-STUDY, BUT *SERVE*-STUDY.** Obama “believe[s] we need to move now to raise the service threshold to 25 percent so that more students can afford to engage in public service. This will help more than 200,000 college students a year complete part-time public service while they are in school. [I] will work to help colleges and universities reach the goal of 50 percent in serve-study.”

**SUPPORT THE ROTC.** Presidential debate moderator Tim Russert: “Senator Obama . . . [w]ill you vigorously enforce a statute which says colleges must allow military recruiters on campus and provide ROTC programs?” Senator Obama: “Yes.”

**SUPPORT VIRTUAL LEARNING.** Obama will “support efforts to allow students to take advantage of virtual learning opportunities for college credit, particularly in rural areas.”

**CONTINUE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.** “So I still believe in affirmative action as a means of overcoming both historic and potentially current discrimination, but I think that it can’t be a quota system and it can’t be something that is simply applied without looking at the whole person, whether that person is black or white or Hispanic, male or female.” “At the college level, I will work to increase our number of science and engineering graduates, encourage undergraduates studying math and science to pursue graduate studies, and work to increase the representation of minorities and women in the science and technology pipeline, tapping the diversity of America to meet the increasing demand for a skilled workforce.”

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### Immigrant Education

*I live in America, but I’m not an American citizen. Are my children included in your plan?*

FOSTER BILINGUAL EDUCATION. Obama “support[s] transitional bilingual education and will help Limited English Proficient students get ahead by supporting and funding English Language Learner (ELL) classes.” He will “support development of appropriate assessments for ELL students, monitor the progress of students learning English, and hold schools accountable for making sure these students complete school.”

ENCOURAGE TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES. Obama maintains that teaching “[f]oreign languages is one of those areas that I think has been neglected. I want to put more resources into it.” “Something that we can do immediately that I think is very important is to pass the Dream Act, which allows children who through no fault of their own are here but have essentially grown up as Americans, allow them the opportunity for higher education.”

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## DIGITAL DIVIDE

“As president, I will set a simple goal: every American should have the highest-speed broadband access—no matter where you live, or how much money you have.”

### Closing the Digital Divide

*How will President Obama ensure that everyone has access to 21st-century technology?*

**EXPAND BROADBAND IN URBAN AMERICA.** “Getting broadband Internet access into every home and business in urban America at an affordable rate could give low-income people increased opportunities to start businesses and engage actively in our communities.”

**OFFER HIGHEST-SPEED BROADBAND FOR ALL.** “We’ll connect schools, libraries, and hospitals. And we’ll take on special interests to unleash the power of wireless spectrum for our safety and connectivity.”

**EQUIP SCHOOLS WITH SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES.** “I will . . . make sure that there are adequate training and other supplementary resources to allow every school, library, and hospital to take full advantage of the broadband connectivity.”

**REFORM UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND.** “I will reform the two major programs which can drive broadband into underserved communities. . . . [M]y administration will establish a multi-year plan with a date certain to change the Universal Service Fund program from one that supports voice communications to one that supports affordable broadband, with a specific focus on reaching previously unserved communities.”

**ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION.** “I will encourage innovation at the local level through federal support of public/private partnerships that deliver broadband to communities without real broadband.”

DEPLOY MODERN COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE. Obama believes “we can get true broadband to every community in America through a combination of . . . better use of the nation’s wireless spectrum; promotion of next-generation facilities, technologies, and applications; and new tax and loan incentives.”

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## ECONOMY

“I think everybody understands at this point that we are experiencing the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. And the financial rescue plan that Senator McCain and I supported is an important first step. . . . But what we haven’t yet seen is a rescue package for the middle class. . . . So [from jobs to middle-class tax cuts for people making less than \$200,000], I’ve proposed . . . specific things that I think can help.”

## Taxes

*Once President Obama is inaugurated, who will be eligible for tax relief? Which income brackets will be taxed more heavily after 2008 than before?*

### FAMILIES

**REWARD WORKING FAMILIES.** “I will reward work through a ‘Making Work Pay’ tax credit of \$500 for American workers and \$1,000 for working families. . . . What I’ve called for is a tax cut for 95 percent of working families.”

**SUPPORT MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES.** “If you’re making less than \$75,000 a year, we are proposing that we offset the payroll tax to give you relief, \$1,000 for the average family.”

**HELP FAMILIES EARNING LESS THAN \$250K.** “And if you make less than \$250,000, less than a quarter-million dollars a year, then you will not see one dime’s worth of tax increase.” “I can make a firm pledge: under my plan, no family making less than \$250,000 will see their taxes increase—not your income taxes, not your payroll taxes, not your capital gains taxes, not any of your taxes.”

**ENHANCE CHILD CARE CREDIT.** Obama will “reform the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit by making it refundable and allowing low-income families to receive up to a 50 percent credit for their child care expenses.”

## **BUSINESSES**

**SUPPORT START-UP COMPANIES.** “I’ve also proposed exempting all start-up companies from capital gains taxes.” Obama would also “provide small businesses a refundable credit of up to 50 percent on premiums for employees.”

**RESTRAIN COMPANIES THAT OUTSOURCE.** Obama believes that “companies should not get billions of dollars in tax deductions for moving their operations overseas.”

**TAX EXCESSIVE PROFITS OF OIL COMPANIES.** “What I will do as president is tax the record profits of oil companies and use the money to help struggling families pay their energy bills.” Specifically, Obama will “enact a windfall profits tax on excessive oil company profits to give American families an immediate \$1,000 emergency energy rebate to help families pay rising bills.”

**RAISE CEO TAXES.** “I will raise CEO taxes, no doubt about it.”

**SHUT DOWN TAX HAVENS.** “My opponent supports tax havens that let companies avoid paying taxes here in America—tax havens that cost \$100 billion every year. But what will work is shutting those tax havens.”

**EXTEND PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT.** Obama will also “extend the Production Tax Credit, a credit used successfully by American farmers and investors to increase renewable energy production and create new local jobs.”

### **ACCOUNTABILITY:**

- ☐ has fulfilled ALL his promises
- ☐ has fulfilled SOME promises
- ☐ FAILED to fulfill any promises
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### **NOTE:**

## ECONOMY

“I think everybody understands at this point that we are experiencing the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. And the financial rescue plan that Senator McCain and I supported is an important first step. . . . But what we haven’t yet seen is a rescue package for the middle class. . . . So [from jobs to middle-class tax cuts for people making less than \$200,000], I’ve proposed . . . specific things that I think can help.”

## Taxes

### THE WEALTHY

END TAX BREAKS FOR WEALTHY AMERICANS. “[We’ll save] money . . . by ending George Bush’s tax breaks for people making more than \$250,000 a year. They’ll go back to paying similar rates to what they paid when Bill Clinton was president.”

REWORK FORMULA FOR PAYROLL TAXES. “What I have proposed is that we raise the cap on the payroll tax, because right now millionaires and billionaires don’t have to pay beyond \$97,000 a year.”

CAP FARM SUBSIDIES. “Congress subsidizes these big mega farms and hurts family farmers oftentimes in the process. And we’ve got to cap those subsidies so that we don’t have continued concentration of agriculture in the hands of a few large agribusiness interests.”

### RELIEF FOR ORDINARY FOLK

PROTECT SENIORS. “[I]f you’re a senior citizen who is making less than \$50,000 a year, or getting less than \$50,000 in Social Security benefits, then you shouldn’t have to pay taxes on that Social Security income.”

EXPAND EITC. “I’ll expand the Earned Income Tax Credit—because it’s one of the most successful anti-poverty measures we have” to “benefit 12 million Americans.”

**PROVIDE REBATE CHECKS.** “What I can do—and what I will do—is push for a second stimulus package that will send out another round of rebate checks to the American people.”

## **FOR EVERYONE**

**SIMPLIFY TAX FORMS.** Obama will “dramatically simplify tax filings so that millions of Americans will be able to do their taxes in less than five minutes.” . . . He will “ensure that the IRS uses the information it already gets from banks and employers to give taxpayers the option of prefilled tax forms to verify, sign, and return.”

**REVISE TAX CODE.** “Right now, we have a tax code that gives incentives for companies to move offshore. Instead, we must have a tax code that rewards companies that are doing the right thing by investing in American workers and investing in research and development here in the United States.”

**OFFER R&D TAX CREDIT.** “I’ll double federal funding for basic research and make the R&D tax credit permanent.”

**DEFER 401(K) TAXES.** “If they have a 401(k), then they are going to see those taxes deferred, and they’re going to pay ordinary income when they finally cash out.”

**BAN INTERNET-ONLY TAXES.** “I support the moratorium on Internet-only taxes and will support all efforts to keep the Internet tax free.”

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### International Trade

*How will an Obama administration improve America’s international economic status?*

ENFORCE TRADE AGREEMENTS. “Well . . . in a year’s time, it’ll be me who’s enforcing [the environmental and labor regulations associated with the Peru trade agreement]. And so we’re going to make sure that the right thing is being done.” Obama will “pressure the World Trade Organization to enforce trade agreements and stop countries from continuing unfair government subsidies to foreign exporters and nontariff barriers on U.S. exports.”

AMEND NAFTA. “There’s no doubt that NAFTA needs to be amended. I’ve already said I would contact the president of Mexico and the prime minister of Canada to make sure that labor agreements are enforceable. But I did want to just go back briefly to the issue of trade and human rights that you had mentioned. We have to stand for human rights, and that should be part of the trade equation.”

OPPOSE CAFTA. “I will fight against trade agreements that undermine American competitiveness, and use trade as a tool to grow American jobs. I will use trade agreements to spread good labor and environmental standards around the world and stand firm against agreements like the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) that fail to live up to those important benchmarks.”

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### Credit Crisis

*How will President Obama protect consumers from predatory lenders?*

**CAP OUTLANDISH INTEREST RATES ON PAYDAY LOANS; IMPROVE DISCLOSURE.** Obama will “extend a 36-percent interest cap to all Americans. [He] will require lenders to provide clear and simplified information about loan fees, payments, and penalties, which is why [he]’ll require lenders to provide this information during the application process.”

**INSTITUTE NATIONAL RATING SYSTEM.** “To make sure that Americans know what they’re signing up for, I’ll institute a five-star rating system to inform consumers about the level of risk involved in every credit card.”

**ESTABLISH CONSUMERS’ BILL OF RIGHTS.** Obama will “create a Credit Card Bill of Rights to protect consumers. The Obama plan will:

- Ban Unilateral Changes
- Apply Interest Rate Increases Only to Future Debt
- Prohibit Interest on Fees
- Prohibit ‘Universal Defaults’
- Require Prompt and Fair Crediting of Cardholder Payments”

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## Social Security

*How will President Obama handle Social Security?*

PRIVATIZATION. “Number one, no privatization of Social Security, no privatization.”

## Minimum Wage

*I make barely enough money to support my family. Will President Obama fight for a living wage?*

RAISE MINIMUM WAGE ANNUALLY. “I won’t wait 10 years to raise the minimum wage—I’ll guarantee that it goes up every single year.”

INDEX IT FOR INFLATION. “I will ensure that the minimum wage is indexed for inflation.”

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### Supporting Domestic Workers

*How will President Obama create, and keep, jobs here at home?*

**CREATE MANUFACTURING STRATEGIES.** To produce new products and new jobs, Obama will “create an Advanced Manufacturing Fund to identify and invest in the most compelling advanced manufacturing strategies.”

**LIMIT OUTSOURCING.** To help all workers adapt to a rapidly changing economy, Obama would “update the existing system of Trade Adjustment Assistance by extending it to service industries, creating flexible education accounts to help workers retrain, and providing retraining assistance for workers in sectors of the economy vulnerable to dislocation before they lose their jobs.”

**CREATE JOBS THROUGH INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE.** “As president, I will launch a National Infrastructure Reinvestment Bank that will invest \$60 billion over 10 years—a bank that can leverage private investment in infrastructure improvements, and create nearly two million new jobs. The work will be determined by what will maximize our safety and security and ability to compete.” “[W]e’ll not only invest in rebuilding our crumbling roads and bridges, and our outdated electricity grid, we’ll strengthen the auto industry that built the middle class in this country.”

**PROTECT EXISTING JOBS THROUGH TWO \$25 BILLION FUNDS.** Obama will create a “\$25 billion State Growth Fund to prevent state and local cuts in health, education, housing, and heating assistance or counterproductive increases in property taxes, tolls, or fees. . . . [It] will also include \$25 billion in a Jobs and Growth Fund to prevent cutbacks in road and bridge maintenance and fund school repair—all to save more than 1 million jobs in danger of being cut.”

**EXPAND FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS.** Obama will “create a program to inform businesses about the benefits of flexible work schedules; help businesses create flexible work opportunities; and increase federal incentives for telecommuting.” He will also “make the federal government a model employer in terms of adopting flexible work schedules and permitting employees to request flexible arrangements.”

**SUPPORT WORKERS’ RIGHTS.** Obama supports “the right of workers to bargain collectively and strike if necessary. [I] will work to ban the permanent replacement of striking workers, so workers can stand up for themselves without worrying about losing their livelihoods.”

**ADVOCATE FOR EFCA.** Obama cosponsored and is a strong advocate for the Employee Free Choice Act [EFCA], a bipartisan effort to assure that workers can exercise their right to organize. He will “continue to fight for EFCA’s passage and sign it into law.”

**DOUBLE MEP FUNDING.** Obama will “double funding for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) . . . which works with manufacturers across the country to improve efficiency, implement new technology, and strengthen company growth. This highly successful program has engaged in more than 350,000 projects across the country and in 2006 alone, helped create and protect over 50,000 jobs.”

**INCREASE FEDERAL WORKFORCE TRAINING FUNDING.** Obama will “increase funding for federal workforce training programs and direct these programs to incorporate green technologies training, such as advanced manufacturing and weatherization training, into their efforts to help Americans find and retain stable, high-paying jobs. [He] will also create an energy-focused youth jobs program to invest in disconnected and disadvantaged youth.”



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### Supporting Domestic Workers

CREATE RPS. Obama will “create a federal Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) that will require 25 percent of American electricity be derived from renewable sources by 2025, which has the potential to create hundreds of thousands of new jobs on its own.”

CREATE NATIONAL NETWORK OF BUSINESS INCUBATORS. Obama will support entrepreneurship and spur job growth by creating a national network of public/private business incubators. Business incubators facilitate the critical work of entrepreneurs in creating start-up companies. Obama will “invest \$250 million per year to increase the number and size of incubators in disadvantaged communities throughout the country.”

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### Keeping Our Homes

*How will an Obama administration help ordinary people pay for and stay in their homes?*

**URGE GOVERNMENT TO PURCHASE MORTGAGES DIRECTLY.** “[W]e should consider giving the government the authority to purchase mortgages directly instead of simply purchasing mortgage-backed securities.” Obama will “encourage Treasury to study the option of buying individual mortgages like we did successfully in the 1930s.”

**MANDATE ACCURATE LOAN DISCLOSURE.** Obama will “create a Homeowner Obligation Made Explicit (HOME) score, which will provide potential borrowers with a simplified, standardized borrower metric (similar to APR) for home mortgages. The HOME score will allow individuals to easily compare various mortgage products and understand the full cost of the loan.”

**CLOSE BANKRUPTCY LOOPHOLE FOR MORTGAGE COMPANIES.** Obama will “work to eliminate the provision that prevents bankruptcy courts from modifying an individual’s mortgage payments.”

**CREATE UNIVERSAL MORTGAGE CREDIT.** Obama will “create a 10 percent universal mortgage credit to provide tax relief to homeowners who do not itemize. This credit will provide an average of \$500 to 10 million homeowners, the majority of whom earn less than \$50,000 per year.”

ESTABLISH FORECLOSURE FUND. “For homeowners facing foreclosure through no fault of their own, we’ll create a fund and reform bankruptcy laws to give them a shot at avoiding foreclosure.”

MANDATE MORTGAGE OPTION INFORMATION. “We’ll mandate that prospective homebuyers have access to accurate and complete information about their mortgage options.”

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## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

“Yes, we need to fight poverty, . . . fight crime. But we also need to stop seeing our cities as the problem and start seeing them as the solution. Because strong cities are the building blocks of strong regions, and strong regions are essential for a strong America.”

### Strengthening Infrastructure

*How will an Obama administration help repair our inner cities buildings and roads?*

**STRENGTHEN CITY INFRASTRUCTURE.** Obama will “open a national bank, seeded with \$60 billion over 10 years, to finance road, bridge, airport, and other public works projects in metropolitan areas. The bank would be modeled on the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., with an independent board of directors.”

**REPAIR AND IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION.** Obama “believes that we must devote substantial resources to repairing our roads and bridges. [I] also believe that we must devote significantly more attention to investments that will make it easier for us to walk, bicycle, and access other transportation alternatives. [I am] committed to reforming federal transportation funding and leveling employer incentives for driving and public transit.”

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### **Offer Real Opportunity to Our Youth**

*How will an Obama administration create opportunities for our young people?*

**CREATE PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS.** Obama will “create 20 Promise Neighborhoods in areas that have high levels of poverty and crime and low levels of student academic achievement in cities across the nation. The Promise Neighborhoods will be modeled after the Harlem Children’s Zone, which provides a full network of services, including early childhood education, youth violence prevention efforts, and after-school activities, to an entire neighborhood from birth to college.”

**END THE DANGEROUS CYCLE OF YOUTH VIOLENCE.** Obama will “support innovative local programs, such as the CeaseFire program in Chicago, that have been proven to work. Such programs implement a comprehensive public health approach that implements a community-based strategy to prevent youth violence. [I] will also double funding for federal after-school programs and invest in 20 Promise Neighborhoods across the country to ensure that urban youth have meaningful opportunities to succeed.”

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### **Create White House Office of Urban Policy**

*In what ways will President Obama institutionalize his commitment to urban policy reform?*

CREATE A WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF URBAN POLICY. “I will also create a White House Office of Urban Policy and have the Director of that Office report directly to me.” The office will “develop a strategy for metropolitan America and ensure that all federal dollars targeted to urban areas are effectively spent on the highest-impact programs.”

### **Supporting Local Businesses**

*How will an Obama administration encourage rich retail options?*

STRENGTHEN BUSINESS CLIMATE. “When I’m president, I’ll make sure that every community has the access to the capital and resources it needs to create a stronger business climate by providing more loans to small businesses and setting up the financial institutions that can help get them started. I’ll also create a national network of business incubators, which are local services that help first-time business owners design their business plans, find the best location, and receive expert advice on how to run their businesses whenever they need it.”



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**NOTE:**

## RURAL AREAS

“Legalized discrimination—where blacks were prevented, often through violence, from owning property, or loans were not granted to African American business owners, or black homeowners could not access FHA mortgages, or blacks were excluded from unions or the police force or the fire department—meant that black families could not amass any meaningful wealth to bequeath to future generations. That history helps explain the wealth and income gap between blacks and whites, and the concentrated pockets of poverty that persist in so many of today’s urban and rural communities.”

### Rural Education

*How will President Obama ensure that his education plan reaches rural areas?*

ENCOURAGE ADVANCED PLACEMENT CREDITS. “I’ve worked with Republican Senator Jim DeMint [of South Carolina] on a bill that would challenge high school students to take college-level courses and make sure low-income neighborhoods and rural communities have access to those courses, and I’ll make it the law of the land when I’m president.”

ESTABLISH TEACHING SERVICE SCHOLARSHIPS. Obama will “create . . . [s]cholarships that completely cover training costs . . . for those who are willing to teach in a high-need field or location for at least four years.”

EMPLOY 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY. Obama will “establish a multi-year plan with a date certain to [ensure that the] Universal Service Fund program . . . supports affordable broadband [in] unserved communities.”

IMPROVE RURAL EDUCATION. Obama will “provide . . . increased pay for teachers who work in rural areas. [I] will create a Rural Revitalization Program to attract and retain young people to rural America. [I] will [also] increase research and educational funding for Land Grant colleges.”

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### Agribusiness

*President Obama will work with our urban areas, but what will he do for farmers?*

**PROTECT FAMILY FARMERS.** Obama will “implement a \$250,000 payment limitation so that we help family farmers—not large corporate agribusiness. [I] will close the loopholes that allow mega farms to get around the limits by subdividing their operations into multiple paper corporations.”

**CAP FARM SUBSIDIES.** Obama will “cap mega farm subsidies so that we don’t have continued concentration of agriculture in the hands of a few large agribusiness interests.”

**PROMOTE COMPETITION.** Obama “support[s the] . . . packer ban. . . . [I] . . . will strengthen antimonopoly laws and . . . producer protections to ensure independent farmers have fair access to markets, control over their production decisions, and transparency in prices.”

**DEVELOP THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS.** Obama will “establish a new program to identify and train the next generation of farmers. [I] will also provide tax incentives to make it easier for new farmers to afford their first farm.”

INCREASE INCENTIVES. Obama will “increase incentives for farmers . . . to conduct sustainable agriculture and protect wetlands, grasslands, and forests.”

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### Rural Economic Development

*How will an Obama administration grow the rural economy?*

**SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.** Obama will “provide capital for farmers to create value-added enterprises, like cooperative marketing initiatives and farmer-owned processing plants. [I] also will establish a small business and micro-enterprise initiative for rural America.”

**CONNECT RURAL AMERICA.** Obama will “ensure that rural Americans have access to a modern communications infrastructure. [I] will modernize an FCC program that supports rural phone service so that it promotes affordable broadband coverage across rural America as well.”

**UPGRADE RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE.** Obama will “invest in the core infrastructure, roads, bridges, locks, dams, water systems, and essential air service that rural communities need.”

## Miscellaneous

**COMBAT METHAMPHETAMINE.** “As president, I will continue the fight to rid our communities of meth and offer support to help addicts heal.”

**IMPROVE HEALTH CARE.** Obama will “work to ensure a more equitable Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement structure. [I] will attract providers to rural America by creating a loan forgiveness program for doctors and nurses who work in underserved rural areas. [I] support increasing rural access to care by promoting health information technologies like telemedicine.”

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**NOTE:**

## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

“We will have to confront the biases in our criminal justice system, but we will also have to acknowledge the deep-seated violence that still resides in our own communities and marshal the will to break its grip.”

### **Reducing Crack or Cocaine Abuse**

*How will an Obama administration rectify the sentencing disparities between crack and cocaine?*

ELIMINATE CRACK/COCAINE SENTENCING DISPARITY. Obama “believes the disparity between sentencing crack and powder-based cocaine is wrong and should be completely eliminated” and “will work in a bipartisan way to eliminate these disparities.”

RECONSIDER SENTENCING FOR FIRST-TIME OFFENDERS. Obama “will also repeal the mandatory minimum sentence for first-time offenders convicted of simple possession of crack, as crack is the only drug that a nonviolent first-time offender can receive a mandatory minimum sentence for possessing.”

### **Reviewing Mandatory Minimums**

*Are mandatory minimums here to stay under President Obama?*

REVIEW SENTENCING GUIDELINES. Obama “will immediately review . . . sentences to see where we can be smarter on crime and reduce the ineffective warehousing of nonviolent drug offenders.”



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### Ending Drug Abuse

*Will President Obama regard drug abuse as a crime or an illness?*

**OFFER REHAB FOR FIRST-TIME OFFENDERS.** “And we will give first-time, nonviolent drug offenders a chance to serve their sentence, where appropriate, in the type of drug rehabilitation programs that have proven to work better than a prison term in changing bad behavior. So let’s reform this system. Let’s do what’s smart. Let’s do what’s just.”

**EXPAND DRUG COURTS.** Obama will “replicate [drug courts] within the federal criminal justice system by signing a law that would authorize federal magistrates to preside over drug courts and federal probation officers to oversee the offenders’ compliance with drug treatment programs.”

**FIGHT METHAMPHETAMINE.** “As president, I will continue the fight to rid our communities of meth and offer support to help addicts heal and to reduce the demand for the drug. I will work to cut off drug lab supplies by restricting global imports of precursor chemicals, and I will take on the Mexican drug cartels in partnership with Mexico and other nations in the region.”

**PROMOTE ANTIDRUG HEMISPHERIC PACT.** “I will direct my attorney general and homeland security secretary to meet with their Latin American and Caribbean counterparts in the first year of my presidency to produce a regional strategy to combat drug trafficking, domestic and transnational gang activity, and organized crime. A hemispheric pact on security, crime, and drugs will permit the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean to advance serious and measurable drug demand reduction goals, while fostering cooperation on intelligence and investigating criminal activity.”

**PROMOTE ANTICORRUPTION, POLICE REFORM.** “The United States will also work to strengthen civilian law enforcement and judicial institutions in the region by promoting anticorruption safeguards and police reform.”

**SUPPORT CROSS-BORDER AGREEMENTS.** “I will . . . support the efforts of our border states to foster cooperation and constructive engagement with the region. . . . The . . . partnership[s]—based on information sharing, technical assistance, and training—provide an excellent model for regional cooperation on security issues. An Obama and Biden administration will support these initiatives and will work to integrate these efforts into the region’s coordinated security pact.”

**FUND BYRNE-JAG PROGRAM.** “As president, I will restore funding to this critical program.” “Funding the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) Program is essential to avoid law enforcement layoffs and cuts to hundreds of antidrug and antigang efforts across the country. . . . Byrne-JAG also funds prevention and drug treatment programs that are critical to reducing the U.S. demand for drugs.”

**ADVOCATE FOR ADDITIONAL REFORM EFFORTS.** “I would . . . ensure that Congress robustly funds prevention and treatment programs like the Second Chance Act, Drug Courts, and the Drug Free Communities Support Program. . . . I will continue to support (and, in the case of drug courts, expand) these programs as president.”

**BAR MEDICAL MARIJUANA RAIDS.** “I would not have the Justice Department prosecuting and raiding medical marijuana users. It’s not a good use of our resources.”

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### Recruiting Public Defenders

*I read recently that public defenders’ offices are understaffed and overburdened. How will President Obama ease the load?*

FORGIVE LOANS. “We’ll recruit more public defenders to the profession by forgiving college and law school loans.” “[We] will work to improve the quality of our nation’s public defenders by creating loan-forgiveness programs for law students who enter this field.”

### Ending Racial Profiling

*I’ve been stopped driving while black, shopping while black—and seemingly breathing while black! What will an Obama administration do to halt this unfair practice?*

BAN RACIAL PROFILING. As president, Obama will “continue his decades-long fight against racial profiling and sign legislation that will ban the practice of racial profiling by federal law enforcement agencies and provide federal funding to state and local police departments if they adopt policies to prohibit the practice.”

COORDINATE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION. “We know that in our criminal justice system, African Americans and whites, for the same crime, are arrested at very different rates, are convicted at very different rates, receive very different sentences . . . [t]hat is something that we have to talk about. But that’s a substantive issue and it has to do with how do we pursue racial justice. If I am president, I will have a civil rights division that is working with local law enforcement so that they are enforcing laws fairly and justly.”

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### Fighting Hate Crimes

*Violence seems worse somehow when it’s perpetrated in the name of racial hatred. Will President Obama acknowledge that hate crimes deserve special, separate recognition?*

EXPAND HATE CRIMES LEGISLATION. Obama “will strengthen federal hate crimes legislation [and] expand hate crimes protection by passing the Matthew Shepard Act [named for the gay Wyoming student murdered in 1998].”

PRIORITIZE PROSECUTION OF HATE CRIME. “As president, [I] will ensure that the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division makes hate crime a priority.”

### Supporting Ex-Offenders

*How will an Obama administration prepare convicts to reenter society as rehabilitated, productive citizens?*

PROVIDE JOB TRAINING. “[W]e’ll provide job training for ex-offenders [so that] . . . they don’t return to a life of crime.”

CREATE JOBS. Obama will “create a prison-to-work incentive program, modeled on the Welfare-to-Work Partnership, to create ties with employers, third-party agencies that provide training and support services to ex-offenders, and to improve ex-offender employment and job retention rates.”

REDUCE INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS. Obama will “reduce bureaucratic barriers at state correctional systems that prevent former inmates from finding . . . employment.”

FUND TRANSITIONAL WORK. “I will increase funding for transitional jobs and career pathways programs, and I’ll provide greater supports for ex-offenders and their families.”

FUND COUNSELING. Obama “will provide . . . substance abuse and mental health counseling to ex-offenders so that they are successfully reintegrated into society.”

**ACCOUNTABILITY:**

- ☐ has fulfilled ALL his promises
- ☐ has fulfilled SOME promises
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<p><b>NOTE:</b></p>
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## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

“We will have to confront the biases in our criminal justice system, but we will also have to acknowledge the deep-seated violence that still resides in our own communities and marshal the will to break its grip.”

### Reducing Gun Violence

*How will President Obama get guns out of our neighborhoods?*

**SUPPORT GUN TRACEABILITY.** Obama will “repeal the Tiahrt Amendment, which restricts the ability of local law enforcement to access important gun trace information, and give police officers across the nation the tools they need to solve gun crimes and fight the illegal arms trade.”

**CLOSE LOOPHOLES.** Obama “support[s] closing the gun show loophole.” He believes local communities can “take those illegal handguns off the streets . . . and crack down on the various loopholes that exist in terms of background checks for children [and] the mentally ill.”

**MAKE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN PERMANENT.** Obama also supports “making the expired federal Assault Weapons Ban permanent, as such weapons belong on foreign battlefields and not on our streets.”

**MAKE GUNS CHILDPROOF.** Obama supports “making guns in this country childproof.”

**ENFORCE EXISTING GUN LAWS.** “We’ve got to enforce the gun laws that are on the books. We’ve got to make sure that unscrupulous gun dealers aren’t loading up vans and dumping guns in our communities, because we know they’re not made in our communities.”



## Miscellaneous

HELP ESTABLISH NCCIPS. Obama “fully support[s] the provision establishing a National Commission on Crime Intervention and Prevention Strategies (NCCIPS). . . . [It] will investigate approaches that are successful and help state and local law enforcement implement these effective strategies to fight and prevent crime. [It] will also tackle the new 21st-century crime and homeland security challenges the country faces.”

END THE DANGEROUS CYCLE OF YOUTH VIOLENCE. As president, Obama will “support innovative local programs such as the CeaseFire program in Chicago that have been proven to work. Such programs implement a comprehensive public health approach that implements a community-based strategy to prevent youth violence. [I] will also double funding for federal after-school programs and invest in 20 Promise Neighborhoods across the country to ensure that urban youth have meaningful opportunities to succeed.”

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**NOTE:**

## COMMUNITY POLICING

“If I am president, I will reestablish the federal partnership with state, local, and tribal law enforcement by funding the Byrne Justice Assistance Grants [and] the COPS program.”

### COPS Program

*How will an Obama administration help local communities and law enforcement officials trust each other and collaborate on reducing crime in their communities?*

RESTORE FUNDING TO COPS PROGRAM. Obama is “committed to fully funding the COPS [Community Oriented Policing Services] program to combat crime and help address police brutality and accountability issues in local communities. [In addition to putting 50,000 officers on the street, it] . . . provides local law enforcement funding for:

- hiring and training law enforcement officers;
- procuring equipment and support systems;
- paying officers to perform intelligence, anti-terror, or homeland security duties; and
- developing new technologies, including inter-operable communications and forensic technology.”

INVEST IN COMMUNITY POLICING. “[W]e must stand for more than force; we must support the rule of law from the bottom up. That means more investments in prevention and prosecutors; in community policing and an independent judiciary.”

CREATE “COPS FOR KATRINA.” “[I]nstead of unsafe streets and shocking crimes, we will help New Orleans rebuild its criminal justice system. We’ll start a new ‘COPS for Katrina’ program to put more resources into community policing, so that heroic officers . . . have more support.”

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**NOTE:**

# ENERGY

“I consider energy to be one of the three most important issues that we’re facing domestically.”

## Carbon

*What are President Obama’s positions on carbon?*

IMPOSE CARBON TAXES. “I believe that, depending on how it is designed, a carbon tax accomplishes much of the same thing that a cap-and-trade program accomplishes. . . . So as I roll out my proposals for a cap-and-trade system, I will price permits so that [they have] much of the same effect as a carbon tax.”

FIGHT FOR LCFS. “I believe I am the only candidate who has proposed a National Low Carbon Fuel Standard [LCFS]. . . . My LCFS provides a way for us to better understand the impacts of an advanced biofuels industry on the environment, so that as we move forward on cellulosics and other domestic fuels, we do so responsibly.” “The standard requires fuels suppliers in 2010 to begin to reduce the carbon of their fuel by 5 percent within five years and 10 percent within 10 years.”

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## Emissions

*How will an Obama administration keep greenhouse gas emissions under control?*

**REDUCE GREENHOUSE GASES.** Obama has committed to “setting a goal of an 80 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions” . . . “below 1990 levels” . . . by 2050. “I will start reducing emissions immediately by establishing strong annual reduction targets with an intermediate goal of reducing emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.”

**MAKE POLLUTERS PAY.** “All polluters will have to pay based on the amount of pollution they release into the sky. . . . [N]o business will be allowed to emit any greenhouse gases for free.”

**ENFORCE CAP AND TRADE.** “My cap-and-trade system will require all pollution credits to be auctioned [100 percent of them].” “A small portion of the receipts generated by auctioning allowances (\$15 billion per year) will be used to support the development of clean energy and energy efficiency. All remaining receipts will be used for rebates and other transition relief to ensure that families and communities are not adversely impacted by the transition to a new energy, low-carbon economy.”

**SUPPORT CLIMATE SCIENCE.** “I will fully support scientific efforts to understand climate change and [its] effects. . . . I will depoliticize climate science in the federal government and ensure that our policymakers rely on the best scientifically based evidence available. I will also expand on existing federal efforts to examine climate science, ensure that there is greater cooperation across the relevant federal agencies that already analyze aspects of climate science, and seek to bolster U.S. engagement in international climate science initiatives.”

**ACHIEVE CARBON NEUTRALITY BY 2030.** Obama will “establish a goal of making all new buildings carbon neutral, or produce zero emissions, by 2030.”

ENGAGE AGAIN WITH THE UNFCCC. Obama will “re-engage with the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the main international forum dedicated to addressing the climate problem.”

CONVENE EMITTING NATIONS. Obama will “invigorate the Major Economies (MEM) effort and bring all the major emitting nations together to develop effective emissions reduction efforts.”

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### Collaboration

*Energy problems are global, and we’ll need an international team to combat them. How will President Obama ensure that when it comes to the environment, the United States doesn’t go it alone?*

CREATE GLOBAL ENERGY FORUM. “I will . . . engage China and India in global climate-change reduction efforts, and I will create a ‘global energy forum’—[that] will include the world’s highest emitters . . . to apply pressure to developed and developing nations alike to meaningfully reduce their carbon emissions. I will also re-engage the United States with the post-Kyoto international climate negotiations to restore U.S. leadership and pressure on the rest of the world to take similar steps to combat this truly global problem.”

WORK WITH REPUBLICANS—AND EVERYBODY ELSE. “From the moment I take office as president, I will call together scientists and entrepreneurs; heads of industry and labor; Democrats, Republicans, and Americans from all walks of life to help develop and deploy the next generation of energy that will allow us to build the next generation’s economy.”

INFORM THE PUBLIC. “I will report to the American people every year on the State of Our Energy Future and let you know the progress we’ve made toward an 80 percent emissions reduction by 2050, toward replacing over a third of our oil consumption by 2030, and toward improving our energy efficiency 50 percent by 2030.”

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## Investing in New Technologies

*How will an Obama administration keep us on the cutting edge of environmentally protective technologies?*

INVEST \$150 BILLION IN CLEAN ENERGY R&D. “I’ve talked about spending \$150 billion over 10 years in an Apollo Project, a Manhattan Project to create the alternative energy strategies” that “will generate five million new jobs that pay well and can’t ever be outsourced.” “This research will cover:

- Basic research to develop alternative fuels and chemicals;
- Equipment and designs that can greatly reduce energy use in residential and commercial buildings—both new and existing;
- New vehicle technologies capable of significantly reducing our oil consumption;
- Advanced energy storage and transmission that would greatly help the economies of new electric-generating technologies and plug-in hybrids;
- Technologies for capturing and sequestering greenhouse gases produced by coal plants; and
- A new generation of nuclear electric technologies that address cost, safety, waste disposal, and proliferation risks.”

LAUNCH VENTURE CAPITAL FUND. “I will launch a Clean Technologies Venture Capital Fund that will provide \$10 billion a year for five years to get the most promising clean energy technologies off the ground. This venture capital fund will get new technologies from the lab to the marketplace so that in the next few years, the American economy can benefit from America’s innovations.”

PRIORITIZE BROAD ENERGY MIX. “We have to have a broad energy mix, and I as president intend to make this one of my number-one domestic priorities and to put in the resources needed in order to make it happen.”

Electricity

*How will President Obama limit our reliance on electricity?*

REDUCE DEMAND BY 2020. Obama will “set an aggressive energy efficiency goal—to reduce electricity demand 15 percent from projected levels by 2020.”

INCREASE RENEWABLE SOURCES BY 2025. “Ensure 10 percent of our electricity comes from renewable sources by 2012, and 25 percent by 2025.”

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## Renewable Energy

*So many of us drive cars to work every day. How will an Obama administration ensure that not only his White House, but our America, uses fuel efficiently? And will he invest in renewable energy?*

REPEAL 2005 ENERGY BILL. Obama opposes “a 2005 energy bill that represented the largest-ever investment in renewable sources of energy. That bill certainly wasn’t perfect . . . contained irresponsible tax breaks for oil companies that I consistently opposed, and that I will repeal as president.”

BY 2012, INCREASE RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY. “I’ll . . . require that 10 percent of our energy comes from renewable sources by the end of my first term—more than double what we have now.”

EXTEND PTC. “I’ll . . . extend the Production Tax Credit [PTC] for five years to encourage the production of renewable energy like wind power, solar power, and geothermal energy.”

INCREASE BIOFUELS BY 2022. Obama aims “to have 6 billion gallons of . . . fuel come from sustainable . . . biofuels, and we’ll make sure that we have the infrastructure to deliver that fuel in place.”

MODERNIZE NATIONAL UTILITY GRID. “[W]e will . . . need to modernize our national utility grid so that it’s accommodating to new sources of power, more efficient, and more reliable. That’s an investment that will also create hundreds of thousands of jobs, and one that I will make as president.”

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## GENERAL GOALS

**INCREASE FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS.** “I will increase fuel efficiency standards by 4 percent per year, lift the 60,000-per-manufacturer cap on buyer tax credits to encourage more Americans to buy ultra-efficient vehicles, and encourage automakers to make fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles.”

**UPDATE FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS.** Obama will “overhaul th[e] process for appliances and provide more resources to [the] Department of Energy so it implements regular updates for efficiency standards. [I] will also work with Congress to ensure that it continues to play a key role in improving our national efficiency codes.”

**FOSTER PRODUCTION OF FUEL EFFICIENT CARS.** “I’ll provide \$4 billion in loans and tax credits to American auto plants and manufacturers so that they can retool their factories and build these cars.”

**SPUR PURCHASES OF FUEL EFFICIENT CARS.** “[O]ne of the things I want to do is make sure that we’re providing incentives so that you can buy a fuel efficient car that’s made right here in the United States of America, not in Japan or South Korea.” Obama will therefore “create a New \$7,000 Tax Credit for Purchasing Advanced Vehicles.”

**WEATHERIZE HOMES.** Obama will “make a national commitment to weatherize at least one million low-income homes each year for the next decade, which can reduce energy usage across the economy and help moderate energy prices for all.”

## SPECIFIC TARGETS

**BY 2010, INCREASE WHITE HOUSE PLUG-IN VEHICLES.** “Within one year of [my] becoming president, the entire White House fleet will be converted to plug-ins as security permits; and half of all cars purchased by the federal government will be plug-in hybrids or all electric by 2012.”

BY 2012, ENSURE NEW BUILDINGS WILL BE 50 PERCENT MORE EFFICIENT. “We will set a goal of making our new buildings 50 percent more efficient over the next four years. And we’ll follow the lead of California and change the way utilities make money so that their profits aren’t tied to how much energy we use, but how much energy we save.”

BY 2013, REQUIRE ALL NEW VEHICLES BE FLEXIBLE FUEL VEHICLES. Obama will “work with Congress and auto companies to ensure that all new vehicles have FFV capability . . . by the end of my first term in office.”

BY 2013, MANDATE BETTER FUEL EFFICIENCY IN FEDERAL BUILDINGS. Within five years, Obama will “achiev[e] a 40 percent increase in efficiency in all new federal buildings” and “invest in cost-effective retrofits to achieve a 25 percent increase in efficiency of existing federal buildings.”

BY 2015, HAVE 1 MILLION PLUG-IN HYBRID CARS ON THE ROAD. “These vehicles can get up to 150 miles per gallon. [I] believe we should work to ensure these cars are built here in America, instead of factories overseas.”

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### Drilling for Oil and Natural Gas

*Does President Obama support drilling?*

USE IT OR LOSE IT. “[W]e should start by telling the oil companies to drill on the 68 million acres they currently have access to but haven’t touched. And if they don’t, we should require them to give up their leases to someone who will.”

SAY YES TO LIMITED OFFSHORE DRILLING. “I believe in the need for increased oil production. We’re going to have to explore new ways to get more oil, and that includes offshore drilling. It includes telling the oil companies, [which] currently have 68 million acres that they’re not using, that either you use them or you lose them.”

SAY NO TO ARCTIC DRILLING. “I strongly reject drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge because it would irreversibly damage a protected national wildlife refuge.”

PRIORITIZE ALASKA PIPELINE. “We should also tap more of our substantial natural gas reserves and work with the Canadian government to finally build the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline, delivering clean natural gas and creating good jobs in the process.” “As president, [I] will work with stakeholders to facilitate construction of the pipeline. Not only is this pipeline critical to our energy security, it will create thousands of new jobs.”

# Oil

*How will President Obama manage our petroleum reserves?*

**SHUT SPECULATION LOOPHOLES.** “Current loopholes in Commodity Futures Trading Commission regulations have contributed to the skyrocketing price of oil on world markets. . . . [I] will enact simple legislation to close these loopholes and increase transparency on the market to help bring oil prices down and prevent traders from unfairly lining their pockets at the expense of the American people.”

**LEASE NATIONAL PETROLEUM RESERVE.** “Over the next five years, we should also lease more of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska for oil and gas production.”

**SELL SOME OIL FROM STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE.** “We should sell 70 million barrels of oil from our Strategic Petroleum Reserve for less expensive crude, which in the past has lowered gas prices within two weeks.” Our current “economic emergency . . . requires a limited, responsible swap of light oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) for heavy crude oil to help bring down prices at the pump.”

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## Nuclear Energy

*What role does nuclear energy play in President Obama’s energy policy?*

SAFELY STORE NUCLEAR ENERGY. “I think that with nuclear power, we have got to see if there are ways for us to store the radioactive material in a safe, environmentally sound way, and if we can do that and deal with some of the safety and security issues, [nuclear power] is something that we should look at.”

BAN NEW NUKES. “I will not authorize the development of new nuclear weapons. And I will make the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons worldwide a central element of U.S. nuclear policy.”

DON’T DUMP AT YUCCA. “I will end the notion of Yucca Mountain because it has not been based on the sort of sound science that can assure the people of Nevada that they’re going to be safe. And that, I think, was a mistake.”

## Coal

*How will President Obama ensure that American coal is more cleanly mined?*

PRIORITIZE LOW-CARBON COAL TECHNOLOGIES. “As president, I will significantly increase the resources devoted to the commercialization and deployment of low-carbon coal technologies and use a broad range of mechanisms to commercialize clean-coal technology. I will direct my Secretary of Energy to enter into public/private partnerships to develop five ‘first-of-a-kind’ commercial-scale, coal-fired plants with carbon capture and sequestration.” “If we are using coal in the absence of these clean technologies, then we are going to be worsening the trend of global warming, and that is something that we can’t do.”

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### Sacrifice and Service

*Will President Obama call upon ordinary Americans to help create a better, greener America?*

ENCOURAGE MASS TRANSIT. “I will . . . encourage communities around the nation to design and build sustainable communities that cut energy use with walkable community designs and expanded investment in mass transit.”

CREATE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE CORPS. “I will . . . create the 5-E (Energy Efficiency, Environmental Education and Employment) Disconnected Youth Service Corps. This program will directly engage disconnected and disadvantaged youth in energy efficiency and environmental service opportunities to strengthen their communities while also providing them with practical skills and experience in important career fields of expected high-growth employment. The program will engage private-sector employers and unions to provide apprenticeship opportunities.”

LINK VETS WITH GREEN JOBS. Obama will “ensure that more of our veterans can enter the new energy economy. [I] will create a new ‘Green Vet Initiative’ that will have two missions: first, it will offer counseling and job placement to help veterans gain the skills to enter this rapidly growing field; second, it will work with industry partners to create career pathways and educational programs.”

SACRIFICE—IT’S A GOOD THING. “Everybody’s going to have to change their light bulbs. Everybody’s going to have to insulate their homes. And that will be a sacrifice, but it’s a sacrifice that we can meet. Over the long term, it will generate jobs and businesses and can drive our economy for many decades.”

## Green Products and Technologies

*Will President Obama help bring green products and technologies to market at reasonable prices?*

**INVEST IN GREEN PRODUCTS: \$1 BILLION.** Obama will “establish a federal investment program to help manufacturing centers modernize and help Americans learn new skills to produce green products. This . . . grant program will allocate money to the states to identify and support local manufacturers with the most compelling plans for modernizing existing or closed manufacturing facilities to produce new, advanced clean technologies. This \$1 billion per year investment will help spur sustainable economic growth in communities across the country.”

**FUND GREEN TECHNOLOGIES.** Obama will “increase funding for federal workforce training programs and direct these programs to incorporate green technologies training—advanced manufacturing and weatherization training—into their efforts to help Americans find and retain stable, high-paying jobs.”

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## Miscellaneous

CONSIDER ENERGY REBATE. “I believe we should immediately give every working family in America a \$1,000 energy rebate, and we should pay for it with part of the record profits that the oil companies are making right now.”

STRIVE FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE. “[W]e want to free ourselves from Middle Eastern oil in ten years. And that’s something that we can accomplish.”

RESTORE THE GREAT LAKES. “I promise to make restoring the Great Lakes a top priority of [my administration] . . . and [will] push for a \$5 billion trust fund to help get it done.”

CONSERVE PRIVATE LANDS. “As president, in addition to protecting federal public lands, I will put an unprecedented level of emphasis on the conservation of private lands, including increased funding for the Conservation Security Program and the Conservation Reserve Program and creating additional incentives for private landowners to protect and restore wetlands, grasslands, forests, and other wildlife habitat.”

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**NOTE:**

## DEMOCRACY

“And just to wrap up, part of the change that’s desperately needed is to enlist the American people in the process of self-government.”

### Self-Government

*How will President Obama keep me abreast of his, and our, progress?*

CALL FOR TRANSPARENCY. “My administration will open up the doors of democracy. We’ll put government data online, and use technology to shine a light on spending. We’ll invite the service and participation of American citizens, and cut through the red tape to make sure that every agency is meeting cutting-edge standards. We’ll make it clear to the special interests that their days of setting the agenda in Washington are over, because the American people are not the problem in this 21st century; they are the answer.”

PROMOTE ELECTORAL REPRESENTATION IN DC. “The first thing I would do would be to move forward with an agenda to make sure that we give DC the opportunity to elect its own representatives and have some political power on Capitol Hill.”

MOTIVATE POOKIE. “I also know that if cousin Pookie would vote, get off the couch and register some folks, and go to the polls, we might have a different kind of politics. That’s what the Moses generation teaches us. Take off your bedroom slippers. Put on your marching shoes. Go do some politics. Change this country! That’s what we need.”

## Taxes and Investments

*What do my tax dollars entitle me to?*

REINVIGORATE TAXPAYERS. “I will create a High-Performance Team of experts [that] evaluates every agency and every office based on how well they’re serving the American taxpayer.”

EXPECT A RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT. “If American taxpayers are financing this solution, you should be treated like investors. That means that Wall Street and Washington should give you every penny of your money back once this economy recovers.”

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## Voting Rights

*How will President Obama curb voting fraud?*

**PREVENT VOTER FRAUD.** As president, Obama will “sign into law [a bill that enables investigations into deceptive and fraudulent practices and will] charge the Voting Rights Section with vigorously enforcing that law and the provisions of the Voting Rights Act.”

**END DECEPTIVE VOTING PRACTICES.** Obama will “sign into law . . . legislation that establishes harsh penalties for those who have engaged in voter fraud and [that] provides voters who have been misinformed with accurate and full information so they can vote.”

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## DEMOCRACY

“And just to wrap up, part of the change that’s desperately needed is to enlist the American people in the process of self-government.”

### Service

*This book has informed me of what my country can do for me. What can I do for my country?*

**EXPAND THE PEACE CORPS.** Obama will “double the Peace Corps to 16,000 by 2011 . . . [and] will work with the leaders of other countries to build an international network of overseas volunteers so that Americans work side-by-side with volunteers from other countries.”

**SHOW THE WORLD AMERICA’S BEST FACE.** Obama will “set up an America’s Voice Initiative to send Americans who are fluent speakers of local languages to expand our public diplomacy. [I] also will extend opportunities for older individuals such as teachers, engineers, and doctors to serve overseas.”

**EXPAND SERVICE-LEARNING IN OUR SCHOOLS.** Obama will “set a goal that all middle and high school students do 50 hours of community service a year. [I] will develop national guidelines for service-learning and will give schools better tools both to develop programs and to document student experience.”

**CREATE GREEN JOB CORPS.** Obama will “create an energy-focused youth jobs program to provide disadvantaged youth with service opportunities weatherizing buildings and getting practical experience in fast-growing career fields.”

**EXPAND YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM.** Obama will “expand the YouthBuild program, which gives disadvantaged young people the chance to complete their high school education, learn valuable skills, and build affordable housing in their communities. [I] will grow the program so that 50,000 low-income young people a year get a chance to learn construction job skills and complete high school.”

**EXPAND CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.**

Obama will “expand AmeriCorps from 75,000 slots today to 250,000, and [we] will focus this expansion on addressing the great challenges facing the nation. [We] will establish a Classroom Corps to help teachers and students, with a priority placed on underserved schools; a Health Corps to improve public health outreach; a Clean Energy Corps to conduct weatherization and renewable energy projects; a Veterans Corps to assist veterans at hospitals, nursing homes, and homeless shelters; and a Homeland Security Corps to help communities plan, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.”

**ENGAGE RETIRING AMERICANS IN SERVICE ON A LARGE SCALE.** “Older Americans have a wide range of skills and knowledge to contribute. [We] will expand and improve programs that connect individuals over the age of 55 to quality volunteer opportunities.”

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