

Resolutions for consideration July 20, 2019

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Dear members of the Democratic Party Committee Abroad (DPCA),

Near the close of business on May 19, 2019, the DPCA referred the following resolutions to the DPCA Resolutions Committee, to be voted upon within 90 days of May 19, 2019:

- **USCIS closure**, along with the amendment referred to temporary committee by the DPCA
- **Green New Deal**
- **Gun Violence Prevention**
- **Renewable Energy 2019** (as submitted 7 May 2019)

The Resolutions Committee prepared these texts for consideration at the online DPCA meeting of July 20, 2019.

The following resolutions were submitted, by the published deadline, for consideration during the same meeting.

- **Global Deal for Nature**
- **Against Prison Gerrymandering**
- **Anti-War Policies** (resolution in development; to be confirmed in this committee's final report)

We encourage discussion between now and the beginning of the meeting of how these resolutions may be improved and whether they should be adopted. The DPCA Resolutions Committee will report during the online DPCA meeting of July 20, 2019.

DPCA Resolutions Committee: Susan Vaillant, Carol Adamson, Rick Wicks, Will Bakker

Resolution Addressing Likely American Family Separation Arising from the Closure of United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) Offices Outside the U.S.

Text as amended by the temporary committee of DPCA, 18 May 2019, and referred to the Resolutions Committee as amended, 19 May 2019.

Proposed by Carmelan Polce (DA Australia) and Wayne Weightman (DA Cambodia). Supported by Julia Bryan (DA Czech Republic).

Whereas in March 2019 the Trump Administration announced, without public consultation and without warning even to USCIS staff, its intention to close all 22 international USCIS offices and transfer those duties, now performed by USCIS employees worldwide, to domestic offices and U.S. embassies and consulates;

Whereas the DPCA passed a resolution on October 16, 2011 supporting the reinstatement of the acceptance and adjudication of I-130 immigrant petitions for non-U.S. immediate family members (Family) of U.S. citizens living abroad and who wanted to return home to the U.S. with their Family at U.S. Embassies and Consulates that did not have a USCIS office in that country. That resolution references the particular concerns of Democrats Abroad with regards to family separation during immigration application processing and the right to freedom of movement generally;

Whereas while the international USCIS field offices continued processing of I-130 petitions for Family of Americans living in the country where the USCIS field offices were located, Direct Consular Filing (DCF) was terminated on August 15, 2011;

Whereas, when USCIS terminated DCF of I-130 petitions in 2011, due to intense advocating by DPCA and other overseas U.S. citizen groups, USCIS did put in place a policy¹ that allowed for DCF of I-130 petitions in exceptional circumstances with approval of international USCIS field offices: the very offices that are now being ordered closed;

Whereas, since August 15, 2011, international USCIS field offices have been regularly approving requests made by Americans living abroad to DCF their Family I-130 petitions so that they would not be separated for the more than a year it can add to the process versus DCF'ing their I-130 petitions. There are also additional costs and time issues incurred by international mail and answering requests for evidence, and time zone issues involved with calling USCIS in the U.S. instead of dealing with the process in the country they currently reside;

Whereas USCIS officers are responsible for adjudicating a wide variety of petitions and applications filed internationally, providing information services, and issuing travel documents to people in a wide variety of circumstances;

¹ USCIS Policy for DCF of I-130s, USCIS Policy Memorandum PM-602-0043.1, dated May 14, 2012, <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Laws/Memoranda/2012/May/DOS-I130May1412.pdf>

Whereas the closure is expected to materially slow the processing of matters such as family visa applications, foreign adoptions and citizenship petitions from U.S. citizens living abroad and members of the military stationed abroad;

Whereas closing the USCIS offices would reassign about 70 staffers who solve a wide array of problems (such as assisting those who lose their green card, aiding widows of U.S. citizens, helping members of the military obtain legal documents), provide valuable information services (such as providing expertise and advice to families going through the process of adopting internationally, investigating fraud in visa applications, providing technical immigration advice to other U.S. government officials), and, within its Refugee Asylum and International Operations division, process refugee applications;

Whereas the Trump Administration has ~~made no secret of~~ **been overt about** its intention to limit both legal and illegal immigration and to end the policy that allows U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to sponsor non-nuclear family members to immigrate to the U.S., known more recently in the pejorative as “chain migration” and implement a policy of “merit-based” immigration;

WHEREAS Democrats Abroad is opposed to any form of involuntary family separation, including the inhumane separations now happening on the U.S. southern border;

Whereas the closure of immigration offices abroad will discourage and thwart immigration applicants by adding considerable time to what are already lengthy wait times for application processing, eliminating processing in foreign languages and removing services that handle emergency applications;

Whereas immigration lawyers say the Trump administration has delayed application processing and heightened scrutiny of applications that used to clear quickly, preventing foreigners from being able to work, study and join their families in the U.S.²;

Whereas the Trump Administration claims this is a cost-cutting exercise although USCIS's funding comes primarily from fees paid by people who use its services;

² American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) issued a new policy brief that digs into newly available data from USCIS to show the dramatic extent to which processing delays have grown in recent years. This information can be useful in speaking about case delays and answering their questions, as well as with reporters and other interested parties about the huge delays in the system and what should be done. Below please find some key messages from the policy brief as well as links to resources that may offer additional assistance:

"Processing delays" may sound like something minor but make no mistake, these delays mean families struggling to make ends meet, survivors of violence and torture facing danger and an uncertain future, and U.S. businesses falling behind and losing talent to overseas competitors.

The consequences of delays in USCIS processing immigration cases can be dire and they impact millions of people.

As revealed in an AILA policy brief, those delays have reached crisis levels under the Trump administration, inflicting hardships on individuals and employers nationwide.

AILA found that the overall average case processing time surged by 46 percent over the past two fiscal years and 91 percent since FY2014. USCIS processed 94 percent of its form types—from green cards for family members to visas for human trafficking victims to petitions for immigrant workers—more slowly in FY2018 than in FY2014.

Case processing times increased substantially in FY 2018 even as case receipt volume appeared to markedly decrease.

There was a USCIS "net backlog" exceeding 2.3 million delayed cases at the end of FY2017. This total amounts to more than a 100 percent increase over a one-year span despite just a four percent rise in case receipts during that same period.

Yet rather than ease such destructive logjams, USCIS compounds them by imposing policies and practices—like unnecessary interview requirements and spikes in burdensome Requests for Evidence—that drive down efficiency and ratchet up delays. Such measures act as bricks in the Trump administration's growing "invisible wall"—a comprehensive set of actions slowing and decreasing legal immigration to and in the United States.

Congress meant for USCIS to function as a service-oriented benefits entity—one that efficiently and fairly processes immigration cases.

AILA's analysis makes clear that the agency is failing its congressional mandate.

Whereas the policy is part of a greater isolationist endeavor by the Trump administration, withdrawing engagement in international institutions and pulling back U.S. international presence generally;

Whereas the work of the USCIS officers is expected to be taken over by State Department officials in U.S. embassies and consulates, though their consent to take over these duties has not yet been obtained, thus causing enormous concern amongst Americans abroad and the immigration law practitioners who prepare and submit their filings;

Whereas there are going to be discussions between the Department of State (DOS) and USCIS to transfer some of the duties currently undertaken by the International USCIS Field Offices, there's a good argument to be made that returning DCF of I-130s for Family of U.S. citizens living abroad to DOS as it was pre-August 15, 2011, would make sense for efficiency of the process. DOS is most likely able to absorb the filings as they would collect the filing fees for adjudicating the I-130s as well as the fee they get for adjudicating the visa and they can staff up accordingly;

Whereas the practical impact of the closures absent a transfer back to DOS of the authority to accept and process DCF of I-130s, is that it will separate American families who will have to choose between staying with their Family abroad or returning home to the U.S. and being separated from them for at least a year at current processing times (USCIS I-130 processing at U.S. service centers and Visa *adjudication* at Embassies and Consulates abroad);

Be it resolved that Democrats Abroad :

- supports reverting to the DCF process that was in place prior to August 15, 2011, ie DCF of all clearly approvable Form I-130s (Petition for Alien Relative) for Family of Americans living abroad; and
- will advocate for this reversion by all reasonable means including provision of information to American citizens, contacting the agencies concerned, alerting members of the House and Senate and otherwise vigorously advocating the restoration of DCF.

Appendix to the Resolution Addressing the Closure of United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) Offices Outside the U.S.

INTERNATIONAL USCIS OFFICES

Latin America, Canada and the Caribbean (LACC) District

- Dominican Republic - Santo Domingo Field Office
- El Salvador - San Salvador Field Office
- Guatemala - Guatemala City Field Office
- Haiti - Port-au-Prince Field Office
- Mexico - Ciudad Juarez Field Office
- Mexico - Mexico City Field Office
- Mexico - Monterrey Field Office
- Peru - Lima Field Office

Asia/Pacific (APAC) District

- China - Beijing Field Office
- China - Guangzhou Field Office
- India - New Delhi Field Office

Asia/Pacific (APAC) District continued

- Philippines - Manila Field Office
- South Korea - Seoul Field Office
- Thailand - Bangkok Field Office

Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) District

- Germany - Frankfurt Field Office
- Ghana - Accra Field Office
- Greece - Athens Field Office
- Italy - Rome Field Office
- Jordan - Amman Field Office
- Kenya - Nairobi Field Office
- Russia - Moscow Field Office (Closed)
- South Africa - Johannesburg Field Office
- United Kingdom - London Field Office

Resolution in Support of a Green New Deal

Referred to committee by the DPCA, 19 May 2019.

Proposed by Susan Alksnis (DA Canada). Supported by Ken Sherman (DA Canada); David Mivasair (DA Canada); Lissette Wright (DA Canada); Martha McDevitt-Pugh (DA Netherlands); Kent Getsinger (DA Australia); Ann Hesse (DA Germany); Merrill Oates (DA Hungary); Jim Mercereau (DA Spain); Angela Fobbs (DA Germany); Bruce Murray (DA Austria); Ed Ungar (DA Canada); Gordon Gaul (DA Japan); Kendra Borgen (DA Netherlands); Kelsey McLendon (DA Germany); Susan Brennan (DA Canada); Quaide Williams (DA Germany); Darius Pruss (DA Canada); Tim Smith (DA Canada); Rachel Eugster (DA Canada); Amy Poteete (DA Canada); Layne Mostyn (DA Australia); Marnelle Dragila (DA Canada).

Whereas climate breakdown is an existential threat to the global environment, human and non-human life, security and economies; and,

Whereas disruptions caused by climate breakdown already negatively affect Americans living outside and in the United States, as well as fellow world citizens, by leading to more and deadlier extreme weather events; rising sea levels; battering the world's infrastructure; decreasing agricultural production; increasing mass migrations; threatening global and national security; disproportionately impacting poor and vulnerable communities, women and girls; and exacerbating systemic injustices (racial, regional, social, gender-based, environmental, and economic); and,

Whereas, the United States is currently experiencing related crises regarding life expectancy, access to basic needs, wage stagnation, job reductions, anti-labor policies, and the greatest income inequality since the 1920s; and,

Whereas, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has determined that in order to avoid the most severe impacts of a changing climate the world must cut greenhouse gas emissions from human sources in half by 2030 and achieve net-zero global emissions by 2050; and,

Whereas, the Trump Administration and the Republican Party have not only renounced the national commitment to the Paris Accord but are actively and openly working to increase America's reliance on fossil fuels and emissions of greenhouse gases; and,

Whereas, congressional Democrats have introduced H.R. 109 and S.Res. 59, supported as of April 15, 2019 by 103 co-sponsors, to implement a "Green New Deal," with the aim of achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions; establishing millions of high-wage jobs and ensuring economic security for all; investing in infrastructure and industry; securing clean air and water, climate and community resiliency, healthy food, access to nature, and a sustainable environment for all; and promoting justice and equality; and,

Whereas, the Green New Deal calls for a 10-year national mobilization effort, including the following goals and projects: building smart power grids; upgrading existing buildings and constructing new buildings to achieve maximum energy and water efficiency; removing pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation and agricultural sectors; cleaning up

existing hazardous waste and abandoned sites; ensuring businesspersons are free from unfair competition; and providing higher education, high-quality health care, and affordable, safe, and adequate housing to all; and,

Whereas, at least 19 states have already set or are considering 100% clean or renewable electricity targets, several referencing jobs and social justice, and the Green New Deal specifically¹; and,

Whereas, the 2016 Democrats Abroad Platform states in chapter 5 on Environment and Climate Change that we support progressive policies that simultaneously protect the environment and improve quality of life, while stimulating economic development, specifically mentioning carbon emissions, sustainable energy, and energy efficiency; transportation; environmental toxin removal; and animal agriculture subsidies; and in other chapters the Platform supports tuition-free public colleges and universities; improving transport networks, cities, water supplies, and housing stock; nationwide infrastructure development and rehabilitation; economic opportunity for all; federally funded job training and job-creation; and universal health care coverage for every American;

We therefore resolve that Democrats Abroad actively supports the Green New Deal and similar legislation, and will mobilize our members to urge their elected representatives, candidates for office, the Democratic Party as a whole, and members of the public to support the creation of a Green New Deal, similar in its goals and scope to H.R. 109 and S.Res. 59.

¹ EQ Research, “States Chart Paths to 100% Targets,” <https://eq-research.com/blog/100/> and Environment America, “Nine States Campaign for 100 Percent Clean Energy,” <https://environmentamerica.org/news/ame/nine-states-campaign-100-percent-clean-energy>

Resolution urging action on Gun Violence Prevention

Referred to committee by the DPCA, 19 May 2019.

Proposed by Susan Alksnis (DA Canada). Authored by Sanchi Rohira (DA-India).

WHEREAS every day an average of 100 Americans are killed with guns, and hundreds more are shot and injured¹;

WHEREAS in the first ten months of 2018, at least 307 mass shootings had occurred in the United States (Gun Violence Archive, 2018);

WHEREAS the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported that approximately 40,000 people died in the U.S. by gunshot in 2017, the highest in 50 years²;

WHEREAS firearms are reported to be the second leading cause of death for American children³;

WHEREAS March 2018 saw one among the largest youth-led protest movements in modern U.S. history - the March For Our Lives - which called for comprehensive gun safety legislation at the local, state and federal levels;

WHEREAS Democrats Abroad invited all members to support March For Our Lives, and initiated and conducted a ‘Virtual March For Our Lives’⁴;

WHEREAS March For Our Lives had over 800 sister-marches and rallies across the U.S. and around the world, including many organized and supported by DA chapters;

WHEREAS by virtue of residing in countries with tougher firearm regulations, Democrats Abroad members experience the effectiveness of such legislation in preventing the rampant loss of life that is seen in the U.S.;

WHEREAS Democrats Abroad members are concerned by the possibility of their friends and family residing in the U.S. being harmed by gun violence;

WHEREAS Democrats Abroad members therefore acknowledge the possibility of life free from gun violence and strongly wish for its implementation in the U.S.;

WHEREAS the 2016 Democrats Abroad Platform called for universal and complete background checks, greater control of assault weapons and ammunition, funding gun violence research, abolition of all “Stand Your Ground” and “Open Carry” laws, and other measures to help ensure dangerous people are prohibited from having guns;

^{1,3} "Gun Violence In America - Everytownresearch.Org". 2019. *Everytownresearch.Org*. <https://everytownresearch.org/gun-violence-america/>.

² Nearly 40,000 People Died From Guns In U.S. Last Year, Highest In 50 Years". 2019. *Nytimes.Com*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/18/us/gun-deaths.html>.

⁴ "Dems Abroad Marches For Our Lives". 2019. *Democrats Abroad*. https://www.democratsabroad.org/dems_abroad_marches_for_our_lives.

WHEREAS the American people elected a gun-sense-majority to the U.S. House of Representatives during the 2018 midterm elections;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad will actively campaign for gun-sense legislation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad calls on the Democratic National Committee and the Party recognize gun violence as a public health issue and urge all policymakers to actively prioritize gun violence prevention legislation, such as:

- banning high-capacity magazines and the manufacture and sale of semi-automatic weapons while introducing programs to manage those already in private hands (for example by registering them under a federal database or offering to buy them back);
- stricter disarmament of domestic abusers and high-risk individuals, including better coordination between local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to those ends;
- fully funding the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to research gun violence;
- eliminating Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) restrictions which hinder monitoring of gun sales; and
- strengthening universal required background checks on all gun sales including online and at gun shows.

Resolution on Renewable Energy 2019

New version from May 7. Referred to committee by the DPCA, 19 May 2019.

Proposed by Dana Powers, Jim Christiansen (Democrats Abroad France Energy Policy Group), Submitted by Connie Borde, DPCA and DNC Member. Additional supporters: Amy Sulkis Below, William Below, Robin Guinot, Alex Rehbinder, Salli Anne Swartz, Meredith Wheeler

WHEREAS the dangerous and expensive threat of climate change is compelling us to eliminate sources of anthropogenic carbon pollution in order to avoid serious ecosystem degradation or even collapse;

WHEREAS catastrophes continue to engulf our planet, including rising sea levels, intensifying storms, floods, landslides, melting glaciers, fires, desertification and more;

WHEREAS even our life-support system on earth is jeopardized by a warming of more than 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels

WHEREAS renewable energy often is competitive with fossil fuels;

WHEREAS grid management and energy storage technologies are rapidly developing to meet the challenges of managing high volumes of renewable energy;

WHEREAS renewable energies drastically reduce the pollution of our air, land, and water, and can provide the basis of a new “green” economy with plentiful jobs and adequate energy for our well-being and our industry;

WHEREAS climate science has been under systematic attack by climate change deniers, including the present administration, with renewable energy research to be cut from \$2.3 billion to \$700 million in the 2020 federal budget;

WHEREAS experimental and pilot programs have been developed to ease the transition from fossil-fuel related jobs to renewable energy and other jobs;

WHEREAS markets alone are not capable of piloting a systems-level change, especially in the face of entrenched oligopolistic energy corporations with their subsidies, amortized infrastructure and assets, and established supply chains and delivery systems

WHEREAS Democrats and Republicans alike have argued that alternative energy programs help ensure US energy security;

BE IT RESOLVED that the US federal government should actively support an energy transition to a clean, renewable power system, to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050, with binding interim deadlines at 2025, 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045;

That the US government should pursue a strong industrial policy to halt climate change and put the United States back in line with other countries committed to the Paris Agreement.

That the US government should support a new mobility system powered by electricity, biogas, or hydrogen as appropriate, such as creation of a national high-speed train system run on renewable energy such as hydrogen;

That the US government should require Federal building codes to reduce drastically the energy needs of both new and older buildings ;

That the Department of Energy should actively support renewable energy through support of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and through loan guarantees and investment;

That the EPA should regulate carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases, and require states to draw-up plans to achieve the emission-reduction targets for each of the 5-year periods until 2050;

That the right of States to legislate higher goals be preserved.

Resolution in Support of a Global Deal for Nature¹

Proposed by Rachel Eugster (DA Canada); Supported by Denise Roig (DA Canada).

WHEREAS according to the authors of “A Global Deal for Nature: Guiding principles, milestones, and targets” (*Science Advances* 19 Apr 2019: Vol. 5, no. 4 eaaw2869)², which was cited extensively in the *New York Times* on May 11, 2019³, plant and animal species are disappearing at an unprecedented rate, and

WHEREAS biodiversity is critical to an inhabitable planet for humans and other species, and whereas humans are culpable in “what many scientists believe to be a planetary emergency,” and

WHEREAS “the at-risk population includes a half-million land-based species and one-third of marine mammals and corals,” and

WHEREAS the loss of biodiversity is an economic crisis as well as a moral one, as diverse ecosystems supply billions of dollars’ worth of irreplaceable “ecosystem services,” and as “the loss of trees, grasslands and wetlands is costing the equivalent of about 10% (or \$8 trillion) of the world’s annual gross domestic product (GDP), driving species extinctions, intensifying climate change and pushing the planet toward a sixth mass species extinction,”⁴ and

WHEREAS research suggests that “we can only meet the target of remaining below 1.5°C in average global temperature rise by ending the conversion of forests and other natural lands by 2020,” and

WHEREAS the authors of “A Global Deal for Nature: Guiding principles, milestones, and targets” offer a framework to preserve biodiversity that would work in lockstep with efforts to reduce the most harmful effects of climate change, and

WHEREAS a “companion pact to the Paris Agreement—a Global Deal for Nature (GDN)—could help ensure that climate targets are met while preventing species extinctions and the rapid erosion of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the terrestrial, freshwater, and marine realms,” and

WHEREAS the U.S. has sent delegations to the Convention on Biodiversity but has not yet ratified the treaty setting global targets, and

¹ <https://www.globaldealornature.org/>

² *Science Advances* 19 Apr 2019: Vol. 5, no. 4 eaaw2869; <https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/4/eaaw2869/tab-pdf>

³ *New York Times* editorial, May 11, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/11/opinion/sunday/extinction-endangered-species-biodiversity.html>

⁴ <https://www.globaldealornature.org/about/>, quoting a UN report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

WHEREAS as of June 20, 2019, nearly 3 million people in 92 countries had signed the Global Deal for Nature petition calling on world leaders to protect our planet, and more than 100 organizations and conservation foundations, such as the Jane Goodall Institute, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, and the International Conservation Fund of Canada, had endorsed it (<https://www.globaldealfornature.org/>), and,

WHEREAS every day brings news of more ways in which the Trump administration is actively rolling back environmental protections and obstructing and obscuring the evidence of climate change and its consequences for human existence, and

WHEREAS the accelerated loss of biodiversity is a direct result of climate change, and the 2016 DPCA Platform includes the following statement about climate change: “This issue is a top priority. There is simply no more time to delay. We urge immediate action to address known impacts of climate change. . . .”,⁵ and

WHEREAS the DPCA is currently considering a resolution supporting the proposed Congressional nonbinding resolution known as the Green New Deal and similar legislation, and whereas the Global Deal for Nature, while not yet in the form of a proposal to Congress, was conceived by its authors as a global complementary action, and

WHEREAS the focus of the Green New Deal is on tackling climate change while boosting the economy without specifically addressing the equally critical need to protect and preserve biodiversity,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad calls for the U.S. Federal government to actively support the Global Deal for Nature, and to endorse and prioritize the action targets contained therein, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DPCA also endorses the Global Deal for Nature, and will mobilize our members to urge their elected representatives, candidates for office, the Democratic Party as a whole, and members of the public to call upon the American government to ratify the new global targets to protect nature that will be set under the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity in Kunming, China in 2020, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad DNC Members will take this resolution to the next DNC meeting, to its caucuses and Councils, and to State Party chairs to enlist their support in vigorously advocating for the principles and action targets embodied in the Global Deal for Nature, and for the ratification and enforcement of the Convention on Biodiversity Treaty.

⁵ Democrats Abroad 2016 Platform, p55; https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/democratsabroad/pages/5669/attachments/original/1469418793/DA-PLATFORM_1July2016_final.pdf?1469418793

Resolution to campaign against prison gerrymandering

Sponsored by Elaine Capizzi, Adrienne Johnson and Wen-Wen Lindroth: DPCA representatives from DAUK

Authored by DAUK members: Maya Buchanan and Julie Shields

WHEREAS the Supreme Court of the United States requires that voting districts contain roughly equal numbers of people to ensure that every person receives the same level of representation and the constitutional guarantee of “one person, one vote”.

WHEREAS prison gerrymandering is a practice by which many states and local governments count incarcerated persons as residents of the areas where they are housed when they draw election district lines, which has the effect of artificially inflating the population count of the districts where prisons are located.

WHEREAS prison gerrymandering violates Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, which prohibits voting practices or procedures which discriminate on the basis of race or color.

WHEREAS the federal Census Bureau counts prisoners as residents of the locations where they're imprisoned.

WHEREAS individual states rely on federal Census data to draw their voting districts.

WHEREAS forty-five states do not allow those incarcerated to vote while in prison if they are convicted of a felony.

WHEREAS a significant number of correctional facilities are located in comparatively rural areas that are largely Republican and predominantly white (from 1992-1994, 83 prisons out of 138 were built in non-metropolitan areas).

WHEREAS the communities that are the most thoroughly victimized by prison-based gerrymandering are often Democratic, urban communities of color.

WHEREAS in what is known as “prison gerrymandering”, the interaction of current state laws and the Census inflates the voting power of residents in districts with prisons and violates the constitutional principle of “one person, one vote”.

WHEREAS prison gerrymandering unconstitutionally gives individuals, communities, and districts with prisons more influence and voting power, and unconstitutionally removes influence and voting power from the individuals, communities, and districts where the prisoners resided before being incarcerated.

WHEREAS prison gerrymandering enables state legislative districts with large prisons to send representatives to state capitals based on an inflated number of voting residents.

THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad believes that the Census Bureau should count incarcerated individuals at their last home address, rather than the address of their prisons, during the 2020 and all future Censuses.

THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad will actively campaign for the Census Bureau to cease counting prisoners as residents of prisons and to begin counting prisoners as residing at their last home address.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad will actively campaign for individual states to prohibit prison gerrymandering within their borders and not include prisoners who did not live in the voting districts before being incarcerated within their voting districts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Democrats Abroad will actively campaign for the prison population Census count not to be used in any legislative district at the local, state, and federal level.

Prison gerrymandering: further information and sources

What is Prison Gerrymandering? <https://www.prisonersofthecensus.org/impact.html>

State legislation <https://www.prisonersofthecensus.org/legislation.html#pending>

Information and action from the NAACP <https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/prison-based-gerrymandering-reform/>

A key court case: <https://www.brennancenter.org/legal-work/national-association-advancement-colored-people-et-al-v-merrill-et-al>

Case studies and analysis <https://harvardpolitics.com/united-states/48325/>

Census issues

2010 <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2010/02/11/counting-prisoners-in-the-2010-census/>

2018 https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/memo-series/2020-memo-2018_04.pdf

House of Representatives H.R. 1 <http://clerk.house.gov/floorsummary/floor.aspx?day=20190307>

H.R. 1 An amendment, offered by Mr. Pocan, numbered 37 printed in Part B of [House Report 116-16](#) to end the practice of prison gerrymandering whereby incarcerated persons are counted in Census population counts as residents of correctional facilities and not their most recent residence prior to imprisonment.

Resolution to Endorse Anti-War Policies

Proposed by Sue Alksnis, Canada and Kent Getsinger, Australia.

Co-sponsored by Stefan Moore, Australia (author).

Whereas the US military budget for 2020 will be \$750 billion – more than the amount spent by the next 9 largest counties combined and over four times the amount spent by China and 10 times that spent by Russia, and that real military spending is over \$1 trillion¹; and,

Whereas the military accounts for 61% of all US discretionary spending that could be used to address pressing needs at home including healthcare, education, housing and crumbling infrastructure²; and,

Whereas US defence contractors are among the biggest beneficiaries of military spending and have disproportionate influence on the democratic process through massive campaign financing and lobbying efforts³; and,

Whereas a recent government audit revealed that defence contractors are massively overcharging taxpayers for mundane parts – such as \$8000 for a helicopter gear worth \$500, \$640 for a toilet seat, and \$2.7 billion on a surveillance balloon that never worked - resulting in tens of billion of dollars in overspending⁴; and,

Whereas the US has over 800 military bases in 70 countries and military personnel in 150 countries at a total cost of \$50 billion per year⁵; and,

Whereas the US is now at war in seven countries and is conducting counterterror operations in 76 countries – 40% of the nations on the planet⁶; and,

Whereas the war in Afghanistan and the illegal invasion of Iraq have cost \$5.9 trillion dollars to date and resulted in the deaths of over 6,000 US soldiers and an estimated one million civilians,

¹ The Nation: <https://www.thenation.com/article/tom-dispatch-america-defense-budget-bigger-than-you-think/>

² Watson Institute, Brown University: <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/military-spending-2018>

³ Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_defense_contractors

⁴ The Nation: <https://www.thenation.com/article/only-the-pentagon-could-spend-640-on-a-toilet-seat/>

⁵ Politico: <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/06/us-military-bases-around-the-world-119321>

⁶ Watson Institute, Brown University: <https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/past-statements/> and Tom Engelhardt, Counterpunch: <https://www.counterpunch.org/2018/01/05/mapping-a-world-from-hell-76-countries-are-now-involved-in-washingtons-war-on-terror/>

the biggest refugee crisis the world has seen since WWII, and the destabilisation of the entire Middle East region leading to the continued rise of terrorist groups⁷; and,

Whereas the most dangerous threats to US security are not from foreign military invasion but from domestic terrorism and cyber attacks; and, Whereas many Democrats Abroad live in regions of the world that would be severely affected by regime change wars or superpower conflicts; and,

Whereas the US has pulled out of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) in 2017 and the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 increasing the threat of global nuclear conflict⁸; and,

Whereas the US and Russia currently have 6,450 and 6,850 nuclear warheads respectively – enough to destroy the planet many times over⁹; and,

Whereas the US plans to spend \$1.2 trillion to upgrade its nuclear weapons over the next three decades¹⁰; and,

Whereas the threat of nuclear war is higher than it has ever been with the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists Doomsday Clock set at 2 minutes to midnight¹¹; and,

Whereas the Trump administration has withdrawn the US from the Iran Nuclear Deal (The Comprehensive Joint Action Plan) that had allowed for international inspection of Iran's nuclear facilities in exchange for the lifting of sanctions¹²; and,

Whereas the US/NATO bombing of Libya, conducted without Congressional approval, turned that country into a failed state in the hands of terrorists¹³; and,

Whereas the Trump administration has threatened military intervention in the sovereign nations of Venezuela and Iran without congressional approval¹⁴; and,

⁷ Watson Institute, Brown University: https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2018/Crawford_Costs%20of%20War%20Estimates%20Through%20FY2019.pdf

⁸ Arms Control Association (INF): <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-11/news/trump-withdraw-us-inf-treaty> and Wikipedia (ABM treaty) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Ballistic_Missile_Treaty

⁹ Sipri: <https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2018/06>

¹⁰ Defense News: <https://www.defensenews.com/breaking-news/2017/10/31/americas-nuclear-weapons-will-cost-12-trillion-over-the-next-30-years/>

¹¹ Bulletin of Atomic Scientists: <https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/past-statements/>

¹² The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/07/iran-to-announces-partial-withdrawal-from-nuclear-deal>

¹³ Washington Post: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/george-will-obama-needs-congress-to-approve-this-war/2014/09/17/26de9d3e-3dc9-11e4-b0ea-8141703bbf6f_story.html

¹⁴ Ben Dangle, Counterpunch (Venezuela): <https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/02/01/the-worst-option-is-war-us-intervention-in-venezuela-will-only-deepen-the-countrys-crisis/> and New York Times (Iran): <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/19/us/sept-11-war-law-iran.html>

Whereas George W Bush scuttled an agreement between the Clinton administration and North Korea that resulted in North Korea leaving the Nuclear Nonproliferation Pact in 2003¹⁵; and,

Whereas the US supplies Israel with over \$3 billion in military aid each year while Israel continues its expansion of illegal Jewish settlements on the West Bank in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2334 which calls to “immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory”¹⁶; and,

Whereas in the wake of 9/11 Congress gave the US president the power to declare war anywhere in the world by approving the Authorisation for the Use of Military Force (AUMF)¹⁷; and,

Whereas Article One, Section Eight of the US Constitution states, “Congress shall have the power to...declare war”¹⁸; and,

Whereas the War Powers Act that was passed after the Vietnam War reasserted congressional authority to go to war, and whereas the Act was used to pass a Senate resolution to stop US support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen¹⁹; and,

Whereas President Dwight D Eisenhower warned the nation against the military industrial complex stating: “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.”²⁰; and,

Whereas the Democrats Abroad 2016 Platform recognized that weapons production continues to be the biggest threat to our survival, from cluster bombs and land mines to chemical and biological weapons, and, above all, nuclear warheads that stand ready to be launched across the planet. The danger lies not only in the possibility that a terrorist group or rogue state will obtain such weapons, but also in their use by large and powerful nations. Currently, eight "nuclear" countries around the world possess some 19,000 nuclear warheads, led by the US with 6,800 and Russia with 6,500 – enough to destroy the world many times over. With the US military budget far larger than any other country on earth and a growing military presence in every region of the

¹⁵ Dennis Morgan, Counterpunch: <https://www.counterpunch.org/2017/09/11/what-nikki-haley-doesnt-know-about-the-korean-crisis/>

¹⁶ Haarets: <https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/senate-passes-bill-to-enshrine-military-aid-package-to-israel-into-law-1.6340748>

¹⁷ William A Cohn, Counterpunch: <https://www.counterpunch.org/2018/04/24/carnage-unleashed-the-pentagon-and-the-aumf/>

¹⁸ Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/war-powers.php>

¹⁹ Study.com: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-war-powers-act-of-1973-definition-summary.html> and Vets for Bernie: <https://vetsforbernie.org/2019/04/breaking-house-passes-sen-bernie-sanders-war-powers-act-resolution-yemen/> and USA Today: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2019/04/04/congress-yemen-war-powers-bernie-sanders-mike-lee-column/3363199002/>

²⁰ Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chance_for_Peace_speech

world, the danger of increased conflict and the possibility of a devastating nuclear war is closer than ever before. Our survival on this planet and the welfare of our nation depends not on producing more battleships, fighter jets, tanks and weapons of mass destruction but on their elimination.²¹

BE IT RESOLVED that Democrats Abroad will campaign for the following and urge its delegates to the DA 2020 Global Convention and Democratic National Convention to consider and include all of these issues as planks in the corresponding Platforms:

- reclaim the Constitutional authority of Congress to conduct oversight of US foreign policy and the power to declare war through the War Powers Act
- repeal the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) that gives the president the power to go war without Congressional approval
- substantially cut US defence spending in order to meet human needs at home including healthcare, education, housing and infrastructure
- end the trillion dollar nuclear modernization program and return to the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty, and continued nuclear warhead reductions under NEW START
- entirely eliminate nuclear weapons and return to the Nuclear Freeze Campaign that became a part of the Democratic platform in the 1980s to stop the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons
- ratify and enforce the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty to stop further development and testing of all nuclear weapons, including their introduction into outer space, as indicated in the U.S. ratified 1967 Outer Space Treaty prohibiting nuclear and other WMD in outer space²²
- conduct a review of the nuclear missile sites and the nuclear sharing program in which the U.S. is a key player. This applies to NATO's nuclear sharing that violates Articles I and II of the NPT (Nuclear non- Proliferation Treaty), which prohibit the transfer and acceptance, respectively, of direct or indirect control over nuclear weapons²³
- work for the establishment of the International Nuclear Fuel Bank under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for supplying enriched fuel for peaceful nuclear purposes, as guaranteed under Article IV of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)²⁴

²¹ Democrats Abroad Platform 2016 https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/democratsabroad/pages/5669/attachments/original/1469418793/DA-PLATFORM_1July2016_final.pdf

²² 2016 DA Platform

²³ 2016 DA Platform

²⁴ 2016 DA Platform

- urge passage of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, a treaty to ban the manufacture, stockpile and sale of cluster bombs, agreed to by over 100 countries, with the notable exceptions of the U.S., China, Russia, and Israel²⁵
- return to the Iran Nuclear Deal (The Comprehensive Joint Action Plan) and end crippling sanctions affecting the civilian population of Iran
- work towards a peaceful solution to the dangerous conflicts on the Korean Peninsula and work to provide positive incentives, as opposed to crippling sanctions that harm civilians, for North Korea to return to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Pact
- engaged as an honest, independent broker in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while condemning Israel's illegal settlements on the West Bank and blockade of the Gaza Strip, and press both the Israelis and Palestinians to adhere to international law²⁶
- urge the U.S. government to implement a policy of non intervention in the politics of any Latin America country and to refrain from the use of military force unless said country presents a direct military threat to the U.S.²⁷
- support the closure of the military detention facility in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba²⁸
- bring the perpetual war that began after 9/11 to a conclusion and bring all of our troops home as soon as possible

Note: There are many US and international peace groups pursuing campaigns that DA could encourage its members to support. Below are some of the more prominent groups but the entire list is here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_anti-war_organizations#United_States

- Code Pink: Women for Peace (Grassroots peace and social justice movement)
- Veterans for Peace (war veterans for peace from WWII to Iraq War)
- Iraq Veterans Against the War (activists group of former military personnel)
- Physicians for Social Responsibility (largest physicians organization in US working to protect the public from nuclear proliferation and climate change)
- Campus Anti War Network (opposing occupation of Iraq and military recruiters on campuses)
- Peace Action (focus on preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons)
- Peace Alliance (working on domestic and international peace building)

²⁵ 2016 DA Platform

²⁶ 2016 DA Platform

²⁷ 2016 DA Platform

²⁸ 2016 DA Platform

- United for Peace and Justice (coalition of over 1,300 US and international peace organizations to end permanent warfare and empire building)
- War Resisters League (the oldest pacifist organization in the US)
- Women Strike for Peace (against nuclear testing and deployment)
- International Physicians for the Prevention of War
- Jewish Voice for Peace (campaigning for a just and peaceful solution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict)