

COME LET US REASON TOGETHER

A GOVERNING AGENDA TO END THE CULTURE WARS

POLICY: Reducing Abortions Through Common Ground Policies

Common ground on abortion means reducing abortions in America through policies that address the circumstances that lead to abortion: preventing unintended pregnancies and supporting pregnant women who wish to carry their pregnancies to term, as well as increasing support for adoption. This approach involves the following policy tracks:

1. **Preventing unintended pregnancies.** Prevention policies include grants for sex education (age-appropriate, medically accurate and complete contraceptive information with an abstinence emphasis) and support for teen pregnancy prevention programs, including after school programs and resources to help parents better communicate with teens, and increased access to contraception for low-income women.
2. **Supporting pregnant women through to parenthood and support for new families.** Support policies include expanding Medicaid coverage of pregnant women and S-CHIP coverage of children, prohibiting pregnancy from being classified as a pre-existing condition by insurance providers, and providing support for pregnant and parenting students who are in school.
3. **Increasing support for adoption.** Adoption support policies include expanding adoption tax credit assistance and supporting optional adoption services at group homes for pregnant and parenting women.

POLICY: Protecting the Rights of Gay and Lesbian People to Earn a Living

Even amidst our different beliefs about the issue of sexual orientation, we agree on a policy that protects the basic rights of gay and lesbian people in the workplace. This policy has two provisions, which are grounded in core American values of fairness and the Golden Rule on the one hand and religious liberty on the other:

1. **Making it illegal to fire, refuse to hire, or refuse to promote employees simply based on their sexual orientation.** This policy protects the basic rights of gay and lesbian people to earn a living, and it is careful not to create, or imply, any rights for gay and lesbian people that every other citizen does not already have.
2. **Providing a clear exemption for faith-based employers that is identical to the religious exemption in Title VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 (as specified in the bipartisan H.R. 3685, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act).** We affirm that no legislation to protect the human dignity and rights of gay and lesbian people should threaten the religious liberty of churches and other religious organizations.

POLICY: Renouncing Torture

We agree that the use of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment against prisoners is immoral, unwise, and un-American. We must be better than our enemies, and our treatment of prisoners captured in the battle against terrorism must reflect our character and values as Americans.

We agree that the U.S. should adopt a clear stance against torture that includes the following core provisions, modeled on the bipartisan Campaign to Ban Torture's "Declaration of Principles for a Presidential Executive Order on Prisoner Treatment, Torture and Cruelty":

1. **Following the "Golden Rule."** We will not authorize or use any methods of interrogation that we would not find acceptable if used against Americans, be they civilians or soldiers.
2. **Implementing one national standard.** We will have one national standard for the interrogation and treatment of prisoners. Currently, the best expression of that standard is the U.S. Army Field Manual.
3. **Upholding the rule of law.** We will acknowledge all prisoners to our courts or the International Red Cross. We will in no circumstance hold persons in secret prisons or engage in disappearances.
4. **Affirming a duty to protect.** We acknowledge our historical commitment to end the use of torture and cruelty in the world. The U.S. will not transfer any person to countries that use torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment.
5. **Ensuring checks and balances.** Congress and the courts play an invaluable role in protecting the values and institutions of our nation and will have access to the information they need to be fully informed about our detention and interrogation policies.
6. **Maintaining clarity and accountability.** All U.S. personnel—whether soldiers or intelligence staff—deserve the certainty that they are implementing policy that complies fully with the law. Henceforth all U.S. officials who authorize, implement, or fail in their duty to prevent the use of torture and ill-treatment of prisoners will be held accountable, regardless of rank or position.

POLICY: Creating Secure and Comprehensive Immigration Reform

We agree that we need comprehensive immigration reform that creates an earned path to citizenship and protects families, while securing our borders and treating American taxpayers fairly. The common ground solutions we present here enable us simultaneously to protect our borders, protect families, and protect our values. We agree that we should adopt comprehensive immigration reform with the following provisions:

1. **Securing the borders through rigorous enforcement.** We support active efforts to secure the border and prosecute illegal trafficking, identification fraud, and abusive employers.

2. **Providing a practical, earned path to citizenship.** We support an earned path to citizenship for existing undocumented workers in the U.S. that is fair to American taxpayers and restores the rule of law. We recognize that citizenship is a high honor and agree that it should come with basic obligations such as obeying the law, paying back taxes and reasonable fines, and learning English and American civics.
3. **Establishing a fair guest worker program.** We support a guest worker program that fills jobs where there is a need, but that does not unfairly disadvantage American workers. It should ensure that workers are not exploited and that they are paid for the work they do.
4. **Keeping families together.** We support policies and enforcement that are sensitive to the value of preserving family integrity, keeping parents and children together.