

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District
2017 Democratic Convention
Permanent Resolutions Committee Report
May 13, 2017**

Respectfully submitted by,

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**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Opposes Harmful Priorities Proposed in the Administration's Budget Blueprint**

Whereas,

It is acknowledged that "the budget is not just a collection of numbers, but an expression of our values and aspirations" and priorities.

During his campaign, President Trump pledged to double what candidate Hillary Clinton planned to invest in infrastructure (more than \$1 trillion), eliminate the U.S. national debt in eight years, and promised economic relief to families struggling in cities and in rural America.

On March 13, 2017, President Trump released "America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again" (the Budget) comprised of reductions in funding for all cabinet departments and agencies except for Defense, the National Nuclear Security Administration, Homeland Security, Veterans Affairs, and the General Services Administration.

Reductions to Agriculture include the elimination of \$95 million from the Rural Business and Cooperative Service, an organization responsible for saving or adding over 40,000 jobs in rural areas in 2014 and helping keep thousands of small businesses afloat in rural America.

Reductions to Commerce include the elimination of \$221 million for the Economic Development Administration whose value statement includes driving "innovation and entrepreneurship throughout our country, especially in our manufacturing sector, to help U.S. workers and businesses compete globally"; and the eradication of the Minority Business Development Agency, which "promotes the growth of minority-owned business through the mobilization and advancement of public and private sector programs, policy, and research."

Reductions to Education include the elimination of \$1.2 billion for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program which provides funding for the "establishment of community learning centers that provide academic, artistic, and cultural enrichment opportunities for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools."

Reductions to Housing and Urban Development include the elimination of \$35 million for Section 4 Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing, which supports community development corporations and community housing development organizations that benefit low-income individuals and fund domestic assistance programs like Meals on Wheels, and the elimination of \$1.1 billion for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, Choice Neighborhoods, and the Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program, all which provide support to state and local government programs helping low-income families find affordable housing in safe and secure neighborhoods.

Reductions to Labor include the elimination of \$11 million for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's training grant programs which provide "training and education for workers and employers on the recognition, avoidance, and prevention of safety and health hazards in their workplaces," and an unquantified reduction in Federal support for job training and employment service formula grants, shifting the burden of funding such services to state and local governments.

Reductions to Transportation include the privatization of the air traffic control functions currently overseen by the Federal Aviation Administration, credited with having "the busiest, most complex, and safest air traffic control system in the world," handling more than 50,000 flights per day and 700 million passengers each year and investing in system improvements expected to yield more than \$160 billion in benefits through 2030.

Reductions to Treasury include the elimination of \$210 million for the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund whose mission is to expand economic opportunity for underserved people and communities by supporting the growth and capacity of a national network of community development lenders, investors, and financial service providers.

Reductions to the Environmental Protection Agency include the elimination of \$427 million for specific regional programs such as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed which preserve and restore the country's ecosystems.

The Budget increases funding for Defense by \$54 billion above the 2017 funding level of \$587 billion. The United States military budget is greater than the next seven-highest countries in the world and accounts for 36% of all military spending worldwide. Funding national defense and caring for our military service personnel are vital; however, doing so at the expense of funding diplomatic agencies and domestic development programs increases our exposure to national security risks both at home and abroad.

The quantifiable reductions to Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, Transportation, Treasury, and the Environmental Protection Agency comprise approximately \$3.3 billion or only 6% of the proposed increase to Defense. The increase in defense spending exceeds cuts made elsewhere to the budget, resulting in no reduction in the national debt.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention urges our Democratic elected officials and party leaders to:

1. Condemn these proposed budget cuts as an attack against rural communities, low-income individuals, and all those seeking economic relief in urban and rural America;
2. Denounce the administration's hypocritical and un-American values and spending priorities that will not invest in infrastructure, eliminate the U.S. national debt in eight years, and provide economic relief to families struggling in urban and rural America, but will, instead, eliminate resources from programs that support low-income families and communities, provide jobs and economic development opportunities in underserved areas, and promote stability and growth for all Americans;
3. Develop budget alternatives that ensure the financial stability and continued success of those federal programs and agencies that provide essential benefits to the American people as well as adequate funding for Defense and other agencies that ensure our security and care for our veterans;
4. Develop budget alternatives to focus on: universal health care, public education, environmental protection, and public infrastructure as public rights;
5. Reduce waste in military spending to help fund these alternative budget priorities;
6. Enact legislation to ensure that America's wealthy individuals and corporations pay a progressive share of taxes to lower inequality, stimulate economic growth, strengthen businesses, and keep the national debt from increasing further;
7. Pass a single-payer Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act (H.R. 676), funded by affordable progressive payroll taxes, to reduce health care costs per person, and close the health care funding gap; and
8. Pass a 21st Century Glass-Steagall Act (S.881, H.R. 790, and Virginia H.J. 642), and ensure the continuation and undiminished funding of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to protect the budget and public from further Wall Street excesses.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Urges Opposition of the Unconstitutional Muslim Ban, Executive Orders 13769 and 13780**

Whereas,

President Donald J. Trump signed Executive Order 13769 on January 27, 2017 and revisions thereto in Executive Order 13780, *Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States*, on March 6, 2017 (the Executive Orders) for the purpose of preventing “the admission of foreign nationals who intend to exploit United States immigration laws for malevolent purposes” directing the Departments of Homeland Security, State, and the Director of National Intelligence to “conduct a worldwide review” of “existing screening and vetting procedures associated with the visa-issuance process and the United States Refugee Admissions Program.”

The Executive Orders “suspend the United States Refugee Admission Program (USRAP) for 120 days,” impose “a temporary pause on the entry of nationals from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen” for a period of 90 days subject to certain waivers permissible on a “case-by-case” basis, prioritizing “refugee claims from members of persecuted religious minority groups.”

Executive Order 13780 asserts “Executive Order 13769 did not provide a basis for discriminating for or against members of any particular religion.”

Islam is the majority religion in each of the six countries, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen, subject to the 90-day pause on the entry of foreign nationals, and approximately 55% of all refugees admitted into the United States between October 2016 and March 2017 came from Muslim-majority countries.

During his campaign, Trump stated, “Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what is going on.”

Mayor Rudy Giuliani stated, “So when he first announced it, he said, ‘Muslim ban.’ [...] Show me the right way to do it legally. [...] And what we did was, we focused on, instead of religion, danger – the areas of the world that create danger for us, which is a factual basis, not a religious basis. [...] It’s based on places where there are substantial evidence that people are sending terrorists into our country.”

Multiple courts have determined that provisions of the Executive Orders violate both the Due Process clause of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, by not providing “notice and hearing prior to restricting an individual’s ability to travel,” and the Establishment clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution based on public comments made by President Trump and his advisors.

On December 6, 2015, Vice President Pence, then governor of Indiana tweeted “calls to ban Muslims from entering the U.S. are offensive and unconstitutional.”

“The deadliest and most high-profile terrorist attacks on U.S. soil since 9/11 – like the Boston Marathon bombings and the shootings in Orlando, Florida and San Bernardino, California – were committed either by U.S. citizens or by people from countries other than the [six] majority-Muslim nations named in Trump’s order” and “research shows no Americans have been killed in the U.S. at the hands of people from the [six] countries.”

As reported by the New York Times, “123 people have been killed in the United States by Muslim terrorists since the 2001 attacks – out of a total of more than 230,000 killings, by gang members, drug dealers, angry spouses, white supremacists, psychopaths, drunks, and people of every description.”

It has been acknowledged that Jihadist groups have celebrated the Executive Orders for validating their claims that the United States is at war with Islam. “Comments posted to pro-Islamic State social media accounts predicted that President Trump’s executive order would persuade American Muslims to side with the extremists.” The administration’s policy of religious intolerance creates a substantial blowback effect and serves as a recruiting tool

for adversaries, increasing the threats to our national security and endangering all Americans, including the heroes serving our country, at home and abroad.

Many individuals in America's cultural history are Muslim including Muhammad Ali, Shaquille O'Neal, Janet Jackson, Dave Chappelle, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Cat Stevens, and others. These individuals have contributed to the success of the country and to our culture. Hostility directed toward all believers of any religion can only serve to weaken the principles of liberty the United States was founded on and diminish the diversity that has defined its success.

The founding fathers of our republic recognized the importance of inclusion and religious freedom, free of discrimination, as noted by Thomas Jefferson, "Where the preamble declares, that coercion is a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion, an amendment was proposed, by inserting the word 'Jesus Christ, so that it should read, 'a departure from the plan of Jesus Christ, the holy author of our religion;' the insertion was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan [Muslim], the Hindoo [Hindu], and Infidel of every denomination," and by George Washington, "If they are good workmen, they may be of Asia, Africa, or Europe. They may be Mahometans [Mohammedans/Muslims], Jews, or Christians of any Sect, or they may be Atheists."

A United States policy limiting or denying opportunities for relief for refugees from Syria after recent attacks on the Syrian people by the Syrian government could be perceived by U.S. allies and other Muslim-majority nations as an affront to humanity undermining the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations and its members and severely diminishing the perception of the U.S. as a peaceful world leader.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention:

1. Calls on elected officials and Democratic party leaders to refer to the Executive Orders promulgated by President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Mayor Rudy Giuliani as 'the Muslim ban' to reinforce the true intention of the administration's egregious policies;
2. Firmly opposes the Muslim ban, and asserts that such actions by the United States serve to further disparage followers of Islam and alienate those countries and peoples that would seek cooperation with the U.S. in the promotion of peace and inclusion, and lead to increased risk of hostilities against Americans by those countries and peoples;
3. Urges elected officials and Democratic party leaders to demand that President Trump release his administration's assessment of the screening and vetting procedures with the visa-issuance process and USRAP at the end of the 120-day suspension and publicly acknowledge that the 90-day and 120-day suspension periods have expired, rendering the Muslim ban obsolete; and
4. Urges elected officials to work with the administration on any legitimate effort to fairly and impartially improve the visa-issuance process and USRAP.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Endorses Policies to Recognize and Support Immigration as a Vital Component of American Life**

Whereas,

Immigration in America has a long history, beginning with the first 99 passengers who arrived in the future Plymouth colony from England and Holland. Of these first "immigrants" seven of their descendants were U.S. presidents.

Although limiting the right to vote to citizens, the Constitution protects the rights of "life, liberty, and property" for "any person." In *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine upheld "this new world" as "the asylum for persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty."

The Statue of Liberty became the symbol of immigration during the second half of the 19th century, as over 9 million immigrants came to the United States, with the statue often being the first thing they saw when arriving by boat. The plaque at the base of the Statue of Liberty reads: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

In 2015, 1.38 million foreign-born individuals moved to the United States. India was the leading country of origin for recent immigrants, with 179,800 arriving in 2015, followed by 143,200 from China, 139,400 from Mexico, 47,500 from the Philippines, and 46,800 from Canada. In 2013, India and China overtook Mexico as the top origin countries for recent arrivals.

Immigrants are good for business in the United States. One in six small-business owners in the United States is an immigrant. Immigrants affect social and cultural life in the United States in positive ways. Eastern wisdom has inspired American spirituality. Traditional music and cuisines have enriched American life. Mexican immigrants have served as high government officials, mayors, sheriffs, and school board members. Prominent Mexican artists and entertainers include the writer Sandra Cisneros, the musician Carlos Santana, the boxer Oscar De La Hoya, and the actor and activist Edward James Olmos.

Immigration is a major factor in maintaining the age balance of the United States, reducing the issue of an aging population. 14.8% of Americans are at least 65 years old. In Europe, 20% of the population is of retirement age and in Japan 26%. In Europe, many countries are both losing population and aging at the same time. This causes major stresses as the number of workers supporting the population is decreasing. In the U.S., while the average age continues to increase due to increased life span, we have maintained a relatively stable working population due to immigration. Foreign-born U.S. residents make up 16.4% of the labor force. Loss of immigrants would soon lead to a plunging U.S. worker population and great difficulty in supporting Social Security and Medicare.

1 in 9 Virginians are immigrants. In 2013, 948,963 immigrants called Virginia home. Approximately half of these immigrants were naturalized U.S. citizens. About 3.5% (275,000) of the state's population consisted of undocumented immigrants. 88% - 90% of children from Asian and Latino families were U.S. citizens. Virginia is home to the eighth-largest immigrant population in the United States, and is the largest immigrant community in the southeast region.

Undocumented immigrants comprised 5.1% of the workforce in Virginia. If undocumented immigrants were removed from Virginia, the state would lose \$11.2 billion in economic activity (\$5.5 billion in gross state product and approximately 62,918 jobs). Undocumented immigrants paid \$240.4 million in state and local taxes in 2012.

Immigrants constitute almost 12% of Virginia's population, yet they represent 20% of our entrepreneurs. Immigrants or children of immigrants founded eight of Virginia's 19 Fortune 500 firms. Included are Capital One Financial, the Altria Group, and Dollar Tree. These companies provide jobs to more than 475,000 people and bring in \$110 billion in revenue annually. 18.6% of the foreign born population of Virginia hold graduate or professional degrees, whereas 14.8% of the native population hold these degrees.

On the campaign trail and in his Presidency, Donald Trump has made it clear that he would like to restrict both undocumented and legal immigration. Twice he has issued what is described as a Muslim ban. He has escalated efforts to deport immigrants and has threatened to defund sanctuary cities. In a recent address to Congress, he stated that the nation's immigration system is a drain on American taxpayers and that the country should be more selective about whom it lets in.

"Chilling effect" is a term in law and communication that describes a situation where speech or conduct is suppressed by fear. Raids and deportations have terrified immigrant families and workers throughout the United States. This can lead victims of domestic, gang, and other violence, and workplace violations to avoid seeking police help or other protections for fear of exposure, detention, and deportation by ICE. Some families are canceling their food stamps and other government benefits; for fear that receiving them will affect their immigration status or lead to deportation. Fear of deportation is forcing families to arrange Powers of Attorney to care for their children in the event that parents are detained. Children are crying at school for fear that their parents might not be home at the end of the day. The inhospitable political climate for immigration has also affected tourism. Tourism executives told USA Today that 4.3 million fewer international travelers will visit the U.S. this year as a result, with an estimated revenue loss of \$7.4 billion. 600 colleges and universities wrote to Homeland Security Secretary Kelly expressing concern that the ban will discourage international students, a major revenue source. 97 Silicon Valley companies argued the prospective loss of significant international talent, business, and investment in one of the challenging lawsuits.

When ICE raids deport parents of U.S. citizens (children) there are fiscal impacts to communities. As U.S. citizens, these children must be treated as unattended minors. Child Protective Services may require additional agents and will need to find foster care for the children. Disrupted children have difficulty coping, impacting their academics and socialization. Children may require remediation, counseling, social workers, and school meals among other services provided by taxpayers. In addition, unattended preteens and teens are ripe for gang recruitment as they seek protections and support. This results in higher costs for the public.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention urges that Democratic elected officials, candidates, and party leaders:

1. Extol that America is historically a land of immigrants and that they contribute economically, educationally, culturally, and socially and that even undocumented immigrants contribute to America as workers, taxpayers, and consumers;
2. Provide support for immigrants to offset the "chilling effect" of President Trump's deportation orders;
3. Oppose legislation that would bar individuals from entering Virginia and the United States based on race, religion, or country of origin;
4. Support efforts of the Virginia Office of Newcomer Services that help immigrant and refugee communities gain economic self-sufficiency and social integration;
5. Support Governor McAuliffe's veto of legislation regarding sanctuary cities and local officials acting as ICE agents;
6. Encourage the United States government to offer Start-Up Visas to allow foreign-born persons to build their companies on U.S. soil;
7. Discourage arrests or deportation of persons who are crime free and have children of U.S. citizenship;
8. Secure our borders with technology and agents rather than an expensive wall;
9. Support bi-partisan efforts to achieve comprehensive immigration reform legislation;
10. Improve the Visa work program, and the monitoring of extended stays past a visa's expiration;
11. Support programs such as DAPA, DACA, and the Dream Act.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Urges Investigation of Donald Trump's Possible Collusion with Russia, and
Greater Transparency in Presidential Elections**

Whereas,

There is evidence of Donald Trump's business ties with Russia. In 2008, Donald Trump, Jr. said that there was money "pouring in from Russia," and that Russians comprised a disproportionate share of the family's assets. Independent investigation appears to corroborate the claim. A Reuters investigation published in March of 2017 found that dozens of members of the Russian elite bought nearly \$100 million of Trump-branded property in southern Florida. Mr. Trump himself said on July 20, 2015 that he had "major business" in Russia. Trump's tax returns would shed light on the nature of these and other business interests in Russia, if disclosed.

There is evidence of Trump campaign ties with Russia and its pro-Russian sentiments. Paul Manafort, Donald Trump's campaign manager for part of the 2016 election, between 2006 and 2014, was a paid political strategy consultant for Viktor Yanukovich, a pro-Putin candidate in the Ukraine.

Carter Page, described in March of 2016 by Donald Trump as a foreign policy advisor to the campaign, travelled to Moscow in the summer of 2016 to deliver a speech critical of U.S. foreign policy toward Russia, and, according to him in a later interview, "may have" privately discussed U.S. sanctions against Russia during the trip. In the summer of 2016, the FBI obtained a warrant to monitor Carter Page's communications, after convincing a federal judge that there was probable cause to believe that Page was knowingly engaging in clandestine intelligence activities on behalf of Moscow, and acting as an agent on behalf of a foreign power.

Attorney General Jeff Sessions, during the 2016 campaign, met with the Russian Ambassador to the United States, then later testified to the United States Senate that he had not had contact with any Russian officials.

Donald Trump's former National Security Advisor, Michael Flynn, advocated for closer ties between Russia and the U.S., and during the campaign discussed U.S. sanctions against Russia with the Russian Ambassador to the U.S. Media reports show that RT-TV, a Russian television station considered to be under the control of the Russian government, paid Flynn approximately \$45,000 for a December 2015 speech in Moscow. Flynn failed to disclose the payments when seeking a security clearance to work at the White House for the Trump administration.

There is evidence of Russian involvement in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The leading cyber security organization that investigated the hack of the Democratic National Committee stated that Russian hackers had orchestrated it. In addition, media reports exposed that Russian hackers targeted U.S. voter registration rolls, and used "armies" of Twitter bots to spread fake news. U.S. intelligence agencies concluded that the intent of the DNC hack was to hurt Hillary Clinton's campaign, and to elect Donald Trump.

FBI Director James Comey confirmed publicly that the FBI is investigating potential collusion between Donald Trump's campaign and Russia.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention urges Democratic elected officials to:

1. Insist that a thorough and impartial investigation be conducted into potential collusion between Donald Trump, his campaign, and Russia;
2. Enact legislation requiring candidates to disclose international business interests to appear on the ballot for a Presidential race;
3. Enact legislation requiring candidates to disclose tax returns to appear on the ballot for a Presidential race; and
4. Recognizing that free and fair elections are a compelling national interest, assemble a coalition of government and industry leaders to mitigate the effects of fake news, protect the confidentiality of information in political organizations, and protect the integrity of electronic data (and public confidence in the integrity of such data) in local, state, and federal voting systems and voter registration databases.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Urges Congressional Oversight of and Participation in the Trump Administration's Syria Policy**

Whereas,

On April 6, 2017, Donald Trump ordered military action against Syria in response to intelligence reports of a chemical attack launched by the Syrian government.

Syria is currently in the sixth year of a civil war which has cost at least 400,000 lives, with the pro-Russian Assad regime pitted against both ISIS and anti-government rebels. It is not clear that any of the factions, if victorious, wish to bring about a pro-Western policy.

While military action in response to a humanitarian outrage may be appropriate, the power to declare war and engage in protracted military action is one that is shared between the Executive and Legislative branches. Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution gives Congress the power to declare war, and the text of the War Powers Act states that the law exists to "insure that the collective judgment of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities," and that the President's powers as Commander in Chief are exercised only pursuant to a declaration of war, specific statutory authorization from Congress, or a national emergency created by an attack upon the United States.

Donald Trump appears to have launched his recent military action in direct contravention of his earlier statements about his intentions for Syria, including a September 7, 2013 tweet (after intelligence reports of a 2012 chemical weapons attack by the Assad regime) in which he urged then-President Obama to "stay the hell out of Syria," because there was "tremendous downside and no upside."

Trump himself recognized the need for the administration to seek Congressional approval for attacks against Syria – when Barack Obama was President. On August 29, 2013, Donald Trump tweeted, "What will we get for bombing Syria besides more debt and a possible long term conflict? Obama needs Congressional approval."

Donald Trump has no prior military or foreign policy experience, and his administration lacks a fully staffed foreign policy and national security support structure to advise him. Nevertheless, Trump and his administration have signaled that further military action may follow, and that U.S. involvement in Syria may escalate dramatically. U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, referring to the military strikes, said publicly that the U.S. was "prepared to do more," and that U.S. priorities included "getting Assad out," and "get the Iranian influence out." Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said that Mr. Assad could no longer remain in office, and that "steps are underway" for an international effort to remove him.

On April 12, consistent with his long-standing advocacy for Congress to exercise its Constitutional responsibility to debate and authorize war, Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia called upon the Trump administration to seek Congressional approval before it took any further military action. Senator Kaine wrote to his supporters that the Congressional curb on Executive war-making capacity, "sets us apart from virtually any nation in the world," and that while "conflicts come and go, our rule of law must hold fast."

The administration's sudden reversal of U.S. policy, against a nation where the Russian military is currently operating in support of the regime, could require substantial U.S. military effort, enormous expenditures of treasure, and risks bringing the United States military into another unstable Middle East country and into conflict with another major world power. Such action would also compromise tackling pressing domestic priorities like the slow-growing economy and crumbling infrastructure.

Any further military action in Syria by the Trump administration requires scrutiny, broad-based support, and Congressional approval.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention:

1. Calls on the federal Democratic delegation to:

- a. Insist that, before taking further military action against Syria, the Trump administration obtain Congressional concurrence after a full and open debate about the administration's strategy, motives, and priorities; and
- b. Continue questioning the Administration about its aims, strategy, and the potential costs and risks to the United States.

2. Commends:

- a. Congressman Gerry Connolly for stating that "Congress and the new Administration must begin a dialogue and debate about our Syria policy";
- b. Senator Mark Warner for stating that the Trump Administration needs to "articulate a coherent strategy [...] because the consequences of a misstep are grave"; and
- c. Senator Tim Kaine for continuously defending our system of divided government and rule of law governing War Powers.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Condemns the Trump Administration's FY18 "Skinny" International Affairs Budget
That Will Diminish American Global Leadership,
Cripple Development and Diplomacy Efforts, and Weaken Our Security**

Whereas,

President Trump's budget proposes a draconian 31% cut from current levels of State Department and USAID funding, and a 35% cut to Treasury's International Programs.

Strategic investments in America's diplomacy and development programs, alongside a strong defense, are vital to keep us safe, promote growth, and project our values.

We turn to diplomacy to solve our most intractable national security challenges. It is a political solution we seek in Syria, not a military one. It is the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a multilateral diplomatic effort, which has effectively reversed the Iranian nuclear threat. It is our aid and reconstruction efforts that will eliminate terrorists' sanctuaries in Afghanistan, not a permanent U.S. military presence. Crippling our nation's diplomats not only makes their efforts less effective, but it also further exposes our military by shifting the entire burden to them.

Such a drastic funding decrease will inevitably require a significant loss of personnel and international program closures. This will hamper the development of skilled and experienced diplomats going forward, and undermine our credibility on the world stage overnight. Even with restored funding at a later date, it could take decades to rebuild the infrastructure and relationships that underpin U.S. development and diplomacy programs. With a diminished international presence focused on developing partnerships and problem solving, smaller conflicts can grow into crises that risk lives and require significantly more resources to address.

In anticipation of this severe budget and the resulting jeopardy, 121 retired military leaders sent a letter to Congress stating, "The State Department, USAID, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Peace Corps and other development agencies are critical to preventing conflict and reducing the need to put our men and women in uniform in harm's way. As Secretary James Mattis said while Commander of U.S. Central Command, 'If you don't fully fund the State Department, then I need to buy more ammunition.' The military will lead the fight against terrorism on the battlefield, but it needs strong civilian partners in the battle against the drivers of extremism—lack of opportunity, insecurity, injustice, and hopelessness."

Foreign assistance opens foreign markets for American businesses and creates enduring partnerships abroad. Global trade supports more than 1.1 million Virginia jobs, nearly a quarter of total jobs in the Commonwealth. The investments that we make now help Virginia businesses compete in new and emerging markets. Over 7,600 Virginia companies exported more than \$18 billion of goods in 2015.

This global engagement also facilitates partnerships in international education and research. More than 18,000 international students enrolled in Virginia colleges and universities and contributed \$544 million to Virginia's economy in 2015.

With 95% of the world's consumers living outside of the United States, it is essential for American businesses to engage with the world economy to achieve economic prosperity. U.S. foreign assistance programs turn developing economies into future trading partners, and our diplomats promote American businesses in the competitive global marketplace.

If the United States retreats from our global commitments, we cede ground to countries that do not share American interests and pose a risk to American values. U.S. foreign assistance has long fostered American values through support for civil society, free markets, independent media, and democratic institutions. At a time when

countries like Russia and China are undermining democratic institutions and the post-WWII international order, we need robust diplomatic and development operations.

The U.S. Global Leadership Coalition commented, "Simply put, cutting one-third of our civilian forces of development and diplomacy at a time of extreme global threats, famines of historic proportions, and a refugee crisis not seen since World War II is unimaginable."

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention:

1. Strongly condemns President Trump's proposed cuts to the FY18 international affairs budget;
2. Calls upon Congress to oppose President Trump's international affairs budget cuts and protect level funding; and
3. Commends House Foreign Affairs Committee member Rep. Gerry Connolly (VA-11) for his commitment to international development and diplomacy programs, and for receiving in March 2017 the Save The Children's "Congressional Champion for Children" Award for "outstanding leadership, extraordinary commitment, and vigorous support for our nation's children and for helping children in need around the world."

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Endorses Infrastructure Projects to Move from Carbon-based to Sustainable Energy Sources**

Whereas,

Government has historically played a role in infrastructure development that has led to major economic and social improvements in American life. The government role has included:

- Directly funding infrastructure (the Interstate Highway System, most other roads and bridges and dams, the early Internet);
- Subsidizing private infrastructure development directly, through tax incentives and through research (government-funded pharmaceutical research, Department of Energy research and pilot projects); and
- Regulating infrastructure projects (environmental impact statements, creation and maintenance of standards).

The government role in energy infrastructure has included all the above approaches. When carbon-based energy moved from wood to coal and oil, the government approved the railroads and pipelines that moved energy to where it was needed by imposing its right to eminent domain and later by tax incentives such as the oil depletion allowance. When electricity replaced steam and gas lighting, the government again used eminent domain to provide rights-of-way for power distribution, often from generation facilities located near coal and oil sources, as well as from the first renewable energy source – water power. The government directly funded water power and nuclear infrastructure via dams and projects like the Tennessee Valley Authority. Because energy production and distribution are such key infrastructures, the government has taken extraordinary steps to ensure their availability and to minimize disruptions. These steps have included the development of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, research into “fracking” to produce natural gas, and research and development for improvements in sustainable energy sources such as wind and solar.

Because infrastructure funds are limited, it is vital that government resources be focused on the future, not the past. As the drawbacks to older energy sources become apparent, government should reduce or eliminate its infrastructure funding for obsolescent energy sources and distribution systems and increase infrastructure funding for emerging energy capabilities. While private investment might continue to support distribution systems such as pipelines for carbon-based energy sources, government resources should be directed at sustainable and other energy resources with lower environmental impact. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the Clean Power Plan are examples of appropriate regulatory and investment actions aimed at the future, not the past.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) “made the largest single investment in clean energy in history, driving the deployment of clean energy, promoting energy efficiency, and supporting manufacturing,” according to a White House Fact Sheet. ARRA funded the Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy (ARPA-E), established by George W. Bush; supported “900,000 job-years in innovative clean energy fields”; supported “more than 100,000 projects” in renewable energy generation; and assisted in the massive reduction of costs for clean energy, including a 60% drop in solar photo-voltaic installations and battery costs for electric vehicles from \$1000/kWh to \$300/kWh.

The Department of Energy facilitated the development of a “Smart Grid” plan and ARPA-E funded many of the projects necessary to support that plan. The Smart Grid includes all the electrical transmission infrastructure that is needed to allow both utility size and distributed renewable energy sources to be flexibly and reliably distributed to where they are needed.

The Clean Power Plan provides goals for moving from carbon-based to sustainable energy sources for the generation and distribution of electricity, with flexibility given to the states on how to achieve those goals. According to the EPA, “the Clean Power Plan will reduce the pollutants that contribute to smog and soot by 25%, and the reduction will lead to net climate and health benefits of an estimated \$25 billion to \$45 billion per year in 2030. That includes the avoidance of 140,000 to 150,000 asthma attacks among children and 2,700 to 6,600 premature deaths.”

Virginia already produces much of its electricity from non-carbon-based or lower polluting carbon-based sources such as natural gas. As a result, the Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that a carbon trading program that takes advantage of Virginia's head start, together with some policy changes would:

- “Generate an average of **\$241 million annually** from the sale of carbon allowances that could be invested in Virginia's economy;
- Lead to \$3.4 billion in **energy efficiency improvements** to benefit Virginia consumers;
- **Reduce the typical Virginia resident's electricity bills** by 5% in 2030 for an annual savings of \$77;
- Spur 6,163 MW of **new wind and solar capacity** in Virginia by 2030 to generate \$3.4 billion in new capital investments;
- **Avoid 77 million tons of CO₂** through 2030; and
- Yield **health and economic benefits** worth an estimated \$2.6 billion cumulatively through 2030 by avoiding carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxide pollution.”

ARRA, the Clean Power Plan, and other on-going activities with energy have put the United States on the path to becoming a leader in transitioning from carbon-based to sustainable energy. These federal activities will result in the steady continued development of a new energy infrastructure including energy generation, transmission, and storage. We are now a world leader in sustainable energy.

The Trump administration, via its Executive Order (EO) on “Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth” and its draft budget, would do its best to turn the United States away from the transition to clean energy and back to carbon-based energy. The Trump EO revokes and rescinds major Obama-era EOs, Presidential Memoranda, and reports that support the transition. The Trump budget eliminates ARPA-E.

We have been down this path before. President Carter's administration funded substantial research into solar energy. In the Reagan administration, all this funding was removed along with the solar panels on the White House, and the U.S. lost the initiative on new energy sources for over a decade.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention:

1. Endorses infrastructure projects that support sustainable energy, improve the efficiency of energy use, and ease the transition from carbon-based to sustainable energy sources;
2. Supports the continued implementation of the Clean Power Plan;
3. Supports a budget that retains ARPA-E and Department of Energy development plans for a Smart Grid; and
4. Opposes the development of short-lived infrastructure projects that support carbon-based energy use and delay the transition to sustainable energy.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Condemns the Failure to Implement Medicaid Expansion
For Its Impact on Rural Healthcare in Virginia**

Whereas,

Rural healthcare facilities are under great and increasing financial strain due to the failure of Medicaid expansion. Seventy-eight rural hospitals have failed since 2010. Sixty-two of these hospitals, or 79%, were in the 19 states that failed to implement Medicaid expansion. Of the 19 non-expansion states, 17 have Republican governors. All houses in the legislatures of the 19 states are Republican, with the exception of Maine, which has a Republican governor and a Republican upper house.

In Virginia, the Lee Regional Medical Center in Pennington Gap closed in October 2013. The Wellmont Health System, owners of Lee Regional, stated “The closure is due in part to major cuts in Medicare reimbursements by the federal government associated with the Affordable Care Act and a lack of Medicaid expansion by the Commonwealth of Virginia.”

These comments were echoed at other closed rural hospitals. The Washington Post featured the closure of the Haywood Park Community Hospital in Tennessee, one of nine Tennessee rural hospitals to close. The Post pointed to a major source of the failure: “In 2016, just 664 Haywood County residents bought health plans through its marketplace for people without coverage through a job. By one estimate, 2,200 residents would qualify for Medicaid benefits if Tennessee expanded the program under the law.” Even rural hospitals that remain open for now are clear about their financial difficulties: “Susan Davis, president and CEO of Sacred Heart Health System in Pensacola, said not accepting the \$50 billion in federal dollars would effectively deny healthcare to many low-income working people who desperately need insurance. It also prevents an influx of federal money that would benefit the local economy.”

Basic rural healthcare needs are unmet for both routine and emergency care. Thousands of people attend the annual health clinic in Wise, VA, because there are no good options for routine health care for many adults that are ineligible for Medicaid. The Wise clinic also points out the lack of dental care options for poor adults in Virginia. While Medicaid expansion would not solve this problem – Medicaid doesn’t cover adult dental care in most states – dental problems are often a byproduct of other medical conditions such as diabetes, as well as a poor diet – conditions that the medical care provided by Medicaid expansion would deal with.

Emergency care in areas where there is no hospital or critical care facility, as in Lee County since the closing of Lee Regional, ends up being provided, if at all, in the ambulance on the way to a remote hospital. The Roanoke Times quoted Lee County Sheriff Gary Parsons: “There is no doubt that people have passed away because there was no hospital here. We lose the golden hour in the amount of time that it takes to get them to another hospital in Big Stone or Kingsport.”

New and growing needs of rural communities, such as opioid addiction and overdosing, are an additional impact of the Medicaid expansion failure. Rural communities are disproportionately impacted by the opioid crisis – tiny (by population) Buchanan County in the Western end of the state had an astounding rate of 42 fatalities per 100,000 population, the highest in the state. By contrast Fairfax County, the largest in the state, had a rate of 6 per 100,000. Medicaid expansion would provide key mental health benefits to rural populations that could deal with the mental health issues underlying the opioid crisis.

The additional federal funds for Virginia that would be provided by Medicaid expansion are estimated at \$14.7 billion over the next decade. Much of this funding would go to rural Virginians, given the lower income levels of rural areas. If half these funds went to rural areas, \$7.35 billion of new funding would be available to not only open closed facilities, but potentially to open new ones. Ecuador, a country about twice the size of Virginia, has opened twelve new hospitals and 46 new health centers, primarily in rural areas, over the last ten years at a cost of just \$2.5 billion.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Convention:

1. Condemns the ideological resistance to Medicaid expansion for its negative impact on life in rural Virginia;
2. Endorses the Governor's efforts to expand Medicaid in the Commonwealth;
3. Endorses Rep. Gerry Connolly's Medicaid Expansion Bill;
4. Endorses efforts by Democratic candidates to clarify the negative effects of the failure to expand Medicaid throughout the Commonwealth;
5. Endorses the on-going efforts to re-open the Lee Regional Medical Center by Sen. Warner and members of the Virginia legislature; and
6. Recommends a review of the experiences of Ecuador and other recent implementations of rural health care to develop a long-term plan for improving rural healthcare.

The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention Condemns the Proposed Budget Cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency

Whereas,

President Richard Nixon signed the bill to establish the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in December 1970. It was pulled together from dozens of other organizations in “predecessor agencies, services, administrations, and offices.” The purpose was to consolidate the “protection” functions in one servicing agency with an independent budget and authority to “protect.” Along with the functions it inherited, it was asked to develop programs to address conditions of national significance to human health, the environment, and the economy. Its statutory authority had immense reach...to protect.

Since that time, although one of the smallest of the independent agencies in the Executive Branch, its leaders have been esteemed professionals in their fields. At the outset, EPA lacked formal programs for translating all the information from multivariate streams of data into a smooth, legally defensible, technically reasonable, decision-making system. This took years of practice, relationship-building, and public trust. It took years to build a cadre of seasoned professional analysts, risk assessors, and community liaisons. It took years to build partnerships with sister agencies whose functions and data contributed to the “protection” mission. These included U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, USDA CES, NIH, NOAA, DOI, FWS, NMFS, APHIS, Coast Guard, States, Land-Grant universities, and the non-governmental organization environmental community.

The EPA’s ability to coordinate these functions and get environmental results depended on:

- Voluntary and regulatory reporting (confirmed by both the agency and the states in partnership);
- Public support for statutory standards and goals;
- Public financial support through direct appropriations and grants to states;
- The professionalism of the EPA staff and their counterparts in the states (scientists, engineers, technicians, field personnel, and leaders); and
- Trust based on working relationships and local results including substantial improvements in air and water quality, safer pesticides, higher-yielding farm, fishing, and forest practices, and safer disposal of wastes. EPA is largely responsible for the mindset of “pollution prevention,” “clean manufacturing,” and “green design.”

Over the years, EPA has developed a specialized workforce recruited directly out of professional schools or imported from other agencies. At one time, it had the best toxicologists, risk assessors, species experts, waste-disposal experts, chemical engineers, and epidemiologists. This talent, and the flexibility built into the statutes and administrative law, allowed industry to know what to expect from the EPA during public notice and comment. The give-and-take of the process allowed for industrial creativity and assured basic public safety.

Trump's emphasis on “destroying the administrative state” and the proposed drastic budget cuts will leave future environmental managers with nothing to do but nurse the standards review process in a shell of an agency whose purpose is to stand down on enforcement of the “law of the land” for purely ideological reasons. Trump has proposed a 31% reduction in the 2018 EPA budget, and a recent POLITICO/Harvard poll shows that 60% of the American public opposes these cuts. The Trump administration has already proposed closing EPA's Region 5 Office in Chicago.

Without any Agency integrity, the workforce—the talent base—will diminish and take years to re-establish. The reporting systems and data quality assurance functions will disappear, and take years to rebuild. Chemical reviews, oversight of the science basis for economic decisions, will then take place only in the private manufacturing sector. Each state will be able to set its own quality standards based on political expediency. With no enforceable national standards or EPA resources, state and local environmental protection will be imperiled.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Convention:

1. Condemns the proposed budget cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency as detrimental to protecting the nation's clean air and water as well as detrimental to the state environmental programs funded by EPA-administered grants; and
2. Urges the Congress to use a cost-benefit analysis in setting budget priorities rather than ideological agendas.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Urges Protection of Internet Privacy**

Whereas,

The Federal Communications Commission is the rulemaking authority that maintains the balance between privacy interests for consumers who use the Internet and the commercial interests of Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The ISPs have access and incentive to sell consumers' Internet usage to corporations who would use the information to devise targeted online advertisements and other for-profit schemes.

The Republican-controlled United States Congress recently voted to negate FCC privacy protections around ISPs' use of consumer information, allowing ISPs to sell to third-party advertisers - without consumer consent or knowledge - consumer browsing history, usage of applications (apps), and consumer location data to compose targeted advertisements. The legislation is so anti-consumer that in the House of Representatives, 15 Republicans broke ranks and voted against it.

Privacy is a principle fundamental to U.S. democracy. Privacy is repeatedly protected in the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights, court jurisprudence, and U.S. federal law. A number of federal laws protect citizens' privacy from corporate commercial interests. The Federal Trade Commission Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) both penalize companies who fail to adequately protect consumers' private information, or who use consumer information in a way they did not understand or agree to. Federal law restricts the way telephone companies and video rental companies are allowed to disclose consumers' activities to third parties. These laws were written to protect internationally recognized privacy principles including knowledge and consent, meaning companies which use their customers' private information should inform them of the nature of the usage and obtain their consent to do so. But under the Republican legislation, ISPs would be exempt from *any* of the restrictions described above.

The Internet is an essential resource that has become ingrained in American commerce, political discourse, and culture. Like roads or telephone services, the Internet is essential to everyday life, and ISPs are the conduit to that resource. Many consumers in the United States have only one choice for an ISP. This means that the Republican legislation puts consumers in the position of either surrendering their privacy to the ISP or not using the Internet. Although such a choice is clearly unfair, one Republican Congressman, Jim Sensenbrenner, recently commented that "no one's got to use the Internet," as if deciding not to use the Internet was realistic in 2017. Elevating commercial interests above everyday consumers' privacy is unacceptable and un-American.

Therefore, be it resolved, the Convention calls upon Democratic leaders to:

1. Reverse the aforementioned Republican legislation, and enact pro-privacy protections;
2. Hold hearings at the federal and state levels to understand how ISPs use consumers' private information, and expose abuses; and
3. Through the use of the Democratic National Committee and office holder websites, collect signatures opposing the Republican legislation, and educate consumers about their options to protect their online privacy.

**The Virginia Eleventh Congressional District 2017 Democratic Convention
Endorses Strategies to Recognize and Refute the Lies, Fake News, and
Media Attacks Associated with the Donald Trump Presidency**

Whereas,

President Donald Trump lies extensively; degrades authentic, fact-checked news sources as “fake news”; and promotes and advances known entertainment, propaganda, and fabricated publications as legitimate. The New York Times has logged at least one false or misleading claim each day for 91 of his first 99 days. The Washington Post reported that throughout Trump’s first 100 days, the Fact Checker team tracked 488 false or misleading claims made by Mr. Trump.

Senator Bernie Sanders recently stated, “Donald Trump is a shameless, brazen, bald faced liar. He steals credit, describes the average as superlative, invents history, and spins conspiracy theories. Trump even lies about the weather.” The economy, his legacy, crime, unemployment, immigration, Russia, the election, defense, health care, and the environment are among the many topics President Trump has lied about.

Trump is a fake news factory unto himself. He has promoted hundreds of fake news stories, some impactful, others trivial, including: “Obama is a Kenyan Muslim”, “Hillary Clinton is too ill to serve as president”, and “Ted Cruz’s father was associated with the Kennedy assassination.” Such fake news has dangerous and sometimes near-fatal consequences. The “Pizza Gate” incident resulted in Comet Ping Pong, a D.C. small business, receiving hundreds of threats, and a shooting incident on site. Public Policy Polling showed the effect of this fake news story on voters: When asked if Hillary Clinton was connected to this story, 9% of all voters said “yes”, 72% said “no”, and 19% said they were “unsure”. Of Trump voters, 14% said “yes”, 54% said “no”, and 32% said “unsure”.

Instead of providing evidence for his claims or correcting his statements, Trump has defiantly defended his false assertions by viciously and publicly attacking members of the media and rejecting proven facts, stating, “As you know, I have a running war with the media.” Attacks on the media have included verbal abuse of reporters and the barring of the New York Times, CNN, Politico, the Los Angeles Times, the BBC, and several other world-renowned news organizations from some White House press briefings while including right-wing propaganda outlets such as Breitbart, The Washington Times, and One America News Network. Among others, Trump has taunted Katy Tur (NBC correspondent) by describing her as a “not very good reporter,” “third-rate journalist,” and “Little Katy.” Such personal attacks are intimidating, and incite extreme responses from his supporters including the possibility of physical harm.

Trump has described the media as an “enemy of the people” and he did not attend this year’s White House Correspondents’ Dinner, a time-honored tradition celebrating our First Amendment. Since 1980, all presidents have attended the dinner with the exception of Ronald Reagan in 1981 due to his hospitalization.

Through manipulation of news and outright lies, Donald Trump appears to be “gaslighting” the American people by altering the truth in all forms. Gaslighting is a technique abusers use to exert power and control by disorienting their victims, and causing them to question reality.

Clinical psychologist Bryant Welch, author of the book “State of Confusion: Political Manipulation and the Assault on the American Mind” has said, “If Donald Trump can undercut America’s trust in all media, he then starts to own them and can start to literally implant his own version of reality.” As Marie Konnikova wrote in Politico, one of the most pernicious effects of a serial liar is on cognitive functioning. The psychological impact of this sort of intimidation is anxiety, hopelessness, fear, and anger.

To counter this abuse, journalists have begun issuing instant fact-checks during press conferences and calling out false statements during cable news broadcasts. Facebook and Google have begun assisting users in identifying fake news. The Washington Post and the New York Times publish fact-checking reports on claims made by the president. School teachers are teaching techniques for recognizing fake news such as reading beyond the headline, checking the publication source and story author, and searching for the story on other news outlets.

A healthy democracy depends on an engaged citizenry informed by facts, and grounded in evidence-based reality.

Donald Trump has skillfully weaponized willful dishonesty and fake news against the media and the American people, and it is the civic duty of every American to resist.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Convention urges party leaders and elected officials to:

1. Support truthful and fact-based media reporting, and actively promote reputable news sources;
2. Take measures to educate voters on identifying fake news, and verifying legitimate news stories;
3. Keep voters informed by publishing factual evidence-based information, and refuting Trump's lies through official communications on both traditional and social media;
4. Resist attempts to normalize Trump's efforts to "gaslight" the American people; and
5. Confront and refute all unfounded attacks on elected officials or members of the media as attacks on the underpinnings of our democracy.