



# CPUSA

## 2024 Platform

### A PEOPLES AGENDA

The 2024 election is a time of great risk and opportunity. The outcome of this election will determine the direction of our country and the daily lives of working people for years to come. That is why building the broadest unity possible and joining others in political action to defeat Trump and win progressive victories up and down the ballot is critically important.

A working-class victory in November would mean new opportunities to protect our planet better, increase workers' rights, defend reproductive rights, defend and expand our voting and democratic rights, and so much more.

The people's movement is on the march with renewed energy and greater unity. While we organize to defeat the fascist danger and the MAGA agenda outlined in Project 2025, we also put forward the following 2024 election program.

#### PROTECT REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

**Restore Roe v. Wade:** The Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade has resulted in a patchwork of new state restrictions on a woman's right to bodily autonomy and reproductive rights. While the right-wing praises the "state's rights" approach to this issue, millions of women now live in states where the government now restricts their most difficult and personal health decisions. We oppose the Supreme Court decision and support having Congress and the President codify Roe v. Wade into law to restore a national right to choose.

The right to control one's body (bodily autonomy) is a basic democratic right. The right-wing attack on the trans community seeks to strip people of this right and again put the government in between an individual and their doctor. There should be a guaranteed right to gender-affirming surgeries, mental health services, and general medical care that respects gender identity.

#### TAX THE RICH

**Raise the corporate tax rate:** Income inequality is an issue that needs to be addressed. As the saying goes, the rich keep getting richer, and the poor keep getting poorer. The neo-liberal economic policies of recent decades have widened the gap between rich and poor, worker and boss.

In 1981, the top corporate tax rate was 46%; today it is 21%. Few large corporations pay even that small an amount, if any, by taking advantage of loopholes and deductions. Amazon, META, Netflix, General Electric, Tesla, and other monopolies pay little or no corporate tax. That needs to change.

The corporate tax rate should be raised to 90%, the level it was at under the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. The money raised should be spent on funding people's needs, such as affordable housing, healthcare, childcare, etc.

**Scrap the cap:** The current cap on earned income for Social Security tax is \$168,600. That means anyone earning more than that amount does not pay Social Security tax on the additional income.

To help strengthen the Social Security program, we need to "scrap the cap" on the Social Security tax, extend the tax to unearned income, too and spend some of the new income on expanding Social Security benefits by \$200/month as called for in the Social Security Expansion Act.

#### MEDICARE FOR ALL

**Healthcare is a right:** The United States is the only developed country without universal healthcare. The U.S. has the highest healthcare costs per capita among developed countries. Despite spending more, the outcomes are not always better. The U.S. lags behind many other developed nations in key health indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, and chronic disease management. A sizable portion of the population is uninsured or underinsured, which can lead to disparities in access to care.

Medical debt is a leading cause of personal bankruptcies, and the current cost of healthcare is a huge financial burden for working families. It does not have to be this way. We believe that healthcare is a right. We need a Medicare-for-all healthcare system that is free to all Americans.

## GREEN NEW DEAL

**Fight climate change:** Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time, affecting every aspect of the environment and human life. It has led to significant changes in global temperatures and weather patterns. Climate change is caused by human activity, particularly burning fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas, which increases greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

As a result of the climate crisis, we have seen an alarming increase in global temperatures, extreme weather events, sea level rises and erosion, and biodiversity losses. The world's dependence on fossil fuels drives dangerous CO2 emissions and global warming.

Global warming is the existential crisis of our time, and the planet's very survival is at stake. Policymakers and big businesses have been far too slow to react, and their drive for maximum profits is the cause.

We need urgent economic, legislative, and regulatory changes focused on climate action – net-zero emissions and renewable energy, green jobs, social equity, modern infrastructure, and ending our dependence on fossil fuels. Eliminating our reliance on fossil fuels will require a just transition for workers and the creation of new green jobs.

## A PEACE AGENDA

**Ceasefire in Gaza now:** All wars end in diplomacy, and the current genocide in Gaza will be no exception. Every day that the U.S. allows Israel to continue its policy of ethnic cleansing, more innocent people suffer, and the risk of an even greater regional conflict increases.

In 2024, the U.S. has provided approximately \$3.8 billion in military aid to Israel. This is part of a 10-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2016, which promises \$38 billion in military aid from 2019 to 2028, averaging about \$3.8 billion per year. Israel uses this money to purchase weapons used in war crimes and in violations of U.S. law.

We demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza and an end to military aid to Israel. We call for an end to the genocide in Gaza and self-determination for the Palestinian people.

**Cut the military budget:** The military-industrial complex has too much economic and political power. The military budget for fiscal year 2024 is around \$855 billion, which represents a significant portion of discretionary spending. Compare that

to the \$70 billion spent on affordable housing or the federal investment in infrastructure, including transportation, water, broadband, and energy of approximately \$150 billion annually.

Every dollar spent on war and weapons manufacturing is money that is not available for the critical needs of our communities. We need to cut the military budget by at least 50% and “move the money” from war and weapons manufacturing to more productive uses. We need to re-tool facilities and retrain workers as part of a just transition to a peace economy.

**End the blockade of Cuba:** The ongoing blockade of Cuba is a crime and outrage designed to change the country's social system. The blockade must be ended and normal diplomatic and state to relations must begin.

**Stop expanding NATO:** NATO's ongoing expansion must be reversed leading to dissolving the military block. Russia's troops must withdraw from Ukraine. Ukraine's independence must be guaranteed by the UN.

## AN ANTI-RACIST AGENDA

### COMMUNITY CONTROL OF THE POLICE

We also have a crisis of police violence and murder. In 2023, there were over 1,000 deaths due to police use of force. Far too often, these incidents disproportionately affect communities of color. We support efforts in Congress to eliminate qualified immunity for police officers. For example, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, proposed in response to police violence, included provisions to address qualified immunity.

We need community control of the police. A good example of real community control happened in Chicago in 2021. The Chicago City Council passed the Empowering Communities for Public Safety (ECPS). This ordinance created a community commission for public safety and accountability and local district councils that will have power over the police accountability system in Chicago.

### VOTING RIGHTS

**Oppose voter suppression:** Voter suppression has become a common practice for the right-wing. Several states have enacted or maintained laws that disenfranchise voters, particularly those from marginalized communities. These laws can include voter I.D. requirements, reduction in early voting and absentee voting, voter roll purges, polling place closures, and regulations limiting the ability to correct issues with absentee ballots or restricting the use of drop boxes to reduce voter participation.

It is imperative that a new universal federal election law and process be put into place to guarantee free and fair elections— one person, one vote.

This struggle for a national election law is not an easy one

because of the ongoing legacy of the old segregationist battle cry of “states’ rights.” There are 50 different sets of state election laws, plus D.C. However, support is growing for a uniform national election law that would at least cover federal elections. There is no rationale for 51 different laws governing congressional and presidential elections.

We need national, portable voter registration with a national voter ID given at birth. Babies get Social Security numbers but don’t use them until they work—the same would be true of a national voter ID given at birth. This is the most powerful way of guaranteeing and not denying the right to vote.

We also need to pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which would restore the strength of the Voting Rights Act after the Supreme Court gutted it in the Shelby County v. Holder case.

**Ranked choice voting:** We support Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) because it ensures that your vote contributes to the outcome even if your top choice doesn’t win. It reduces the fear of vote-splitting among similar candidates, which can encourage a wider range of candidates to run. This can lead to a more diverse field and more representative outcomes.

Candidates in an RCV system are incentivized to appeal to a broader audience, including supporters of other candidates, to become their second or third choice. This can lead to more positive and constructive campaigning. RCV can lead to higher voter turnout as people may feel their votes are more impactful and represent their preferences.

RCV ensures that the winning candidate has broad support. Suppose no candidate gets a majority of first-choice votes. In that case, the least popular candidates are eliminated, and their votes are redistributed based on voters’ subsequent choices until a candidate with majority support is found.

Other priorities to expand voting rights include statehood for the District of Columbia, which would end voter suppression for 700,000 people, universal vote by mail, abolish the Electoral College, end the filibuster and restore majority rule in the Senate and non-partisan redistricting commissions to help end gerrymandering.

**Get big money out of politics:** Since the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United v. FEC, we have seen a significant increase in corporate influence in our elections. We have also seen more and more billionaires financing political candidates. These large donations and corporate interests corrupt the political process, undermining democracy and favoring the wealthy and powerful.

We support public financing of political campaigns to reduce the influence of private money in politics and make the electoral process more equitable. This includes increased transparency, donor limits, super PACs, and Independent Expenditures regulation.

## COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

To be sure, racist rhetoric, the so-called “crisis at the border,” and anti-immigrant policies have been weaponized into a political tool of fear and division. The 2024 Republican National Convention was full of frightening nativist rhetoric while thousands of cheering participants proudly held up signs calling for “mass deportations now.” Former President Trump has said that if re-elected, he would deport between 15 to 20 million undocumented people in the U.S., and his political advisor, Stephen Miller, has said that the administration would support the use of National Guard troops to round up undocumented residents across the country.

We support full rights for all workers and their families, immigrant and non-immigrant, and an end to restrictive and repressive immigration policies, including Secure Communities, Operation Streamline, E-Verify, etc. We call for progressive legislation that creates a path to citizenship for as many people as quickly as possible and demands that the U.S. stop its current cruel arrests and deportations. We are for easy access to U.S. citizenship and oppose guest worker programs.

## A WORKERS’ RIGHTS AGENDA

**Pass the PRO Act:** The Protecting the Right to Organize Act is a significant piece of labor legislation that expands workers’ rights and strengthens labor unions. It enhances protections for workers who want to join or form a union, ensuring they are free from retaliation and intimidation by employers. It makes it easier for workers to form unions and negotiate collective bargaining agreements. It would protect the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and streamline the process for resolving labor disputes and unfair labor practices. It would also correct the misclassification of workers as independent contractors, which can deny them benefits and protections.

**Overturn anti-union right-to-work laws:** Right-to-work laws are state statutes prohibiting union security agreements between employers and unions. Specifically, they prevent unions from requiring that employees join or pay dues to a union as a condition of employment.

In 2023, Michigan became the first state to overturn its right-to-work laws in sixty years. While a state-by-state effort is needed, we should prioritize a national solution by passing the PRO Act, which would override right-to-work laws nationally and allow unions and employers to negotiate fair share agreements prohibited under such laws. This ensures that unions are fairly compensated for representing all workers in negotiating contracts that cover union and non-union members.

**Provide workers with a living wage:** The federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour has not increased since 2009. The Consumer Price Index during that same period increased by approximately 35%. The cost of housing, healthcare, education,



and other essentials have also all increased significantly. While the cost of living has increased, the minimum wage has remained stagnant, and corporate profits have increased significantly. Workers who produce the wealth should share in the financial benefits they create. We support increasing the federal minimum and tipped wage to \$25 an hour so that the minimum wage becomes a living wage.

**Increase the Child Tax Credit:** The Child Tax Credit is a \$2,000-per-child tax benefit for families earning less than \$400,000 annually. During the economic crisis caused partly by COVID-19, the tax credit was raised as part of the American Rescue Plan from \$2,000 per child per year to a maximum of \$3,600 per child five or younger and \$3,000 for kids 6-17.

This reached 61 million more children in more than 36 million households and cut child poverty in half. This proven, effective tax policy benefits our most vulnerable population and should be restored and made permanent.

## **HOUSING FOR PEOPLE, NOT PROFIT**

The housing crisis continues to grow. This crisis is especially impacting poorer communities, people of color, immigrants, seniors, and youth. Still, it also affects middle-income families, many working-class people, and those living paycheck to paycheck. Even people living in subsidized and public housing can no longer feel secure. And it's a crisis for renters and homeowners who can't keep up with their mortgage payments.

The problem is systemic. It's rooted in a capitalist housing system that sees housing as a thing (a commodity) that benefits landlords, real estate developers, private equity funds, and big banks, all at the expense of poor and working-class families.

We need massive investment in affordable housing, including immediate funding for government agencies like HUD and Section 8 housing programs. This means building more public housing by sharing funds with state and local governments, not building more housing as an extension of the real estate market. This will require repealing the Faircloth Amendment at the Congressional level, which prohibited an increase in new public housing units so that the burden is not on state and local governments to develop funding mechanisms to create more affordable housing. In addition, tenants must have direct, democratic control over how buildings are run, enforcement of housing protections, and maintenance needs. Public and subsidized housing should be made available to all, including the undocumented living in the U.S.

Housing should cost no more than 10% of a household's income. HUD guidelines call for 30% of a renter's income, but many pay closer to 50% or more. An immediate rollback of rents and mortgages to no more than 30% of income is needed while continuing to struggle to bring it down to 10%.

In every type of housing — Section 8, HUD public housing, market-rate apartments, co-operatives, condos, single-family homes, and manufactured homes (so-called “mobile” homes) — we must make it possible for every person to afford a decent home.

## **CHILDCARE AND PUBLIC EDUCATION**

**Free childcare:** Childcare can be a significant financial burden on families. Free childcare would eliminate this burden on families and allow parents, particularly mothers, to remain in the workforce or return to work after having children.

By removing one of the barriers to employment, free childcare can help reduce poverty levels. Families who might otherwise struggle to afford childcare and other essentials are better able to achieve financial stability.

High-quality childcare can provide crucial early learning experiences for a child's development. Free childcare ensures that all children, regardless of their family's financial situation, can access enriching educational experiences that support their cognitive, social, and emotional growth.

**Education is a right:** Free public education ensures that all children have access to basic education regardless of their family's financial situation. This helps level the playing field and provides every child with the opportunity to succeed.

The right to education should extend beyond K-12 to include undergraduate degrees. Free college education makes higher education more accessible to everyone, regardless of their financial situation.

One of the most significant barriers to college education is the cost, leading many students to incur substantial debt. Free college education eliminates or greatly reduces this debt, allowing graduates to start their careers without financial strain.

Free college education can help level the playing field by providing opportunities to students from low-income families and underrepresented groups. This promotes greater social and economic equity and can help bridge gaps in educational attainment.



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