

# A Declaration of Progressive Principles

Drafted online by the members of The Principles Project and adopted March 1, 2005

We believe in America's historic promise of liberty, justice and the expansion of opportunity for all people. These commitments to fundamental human dignity and a better nation for all animate the American spirit and give us a sense of common purpose. We honor these commitments by recognizing that with the great freedoms afforded us comes an even greater responsibility to see that those freedoms are extended to all people in all places.

We believe that this sense of shared responsibility—for our families, our communities, our nation and our world—strengthens our country and secures our future.

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## **We believe in defending dignity:**

“All people are created equal” is not just a fact—it is a call to action. Either we create justice for all or we have justice for none.

All people have the right to lead their personal lives in accordance with their own beliefs, free from imposition or monitoring by others.

All people have a right to the basic necessities required to lead dignified lives and to pursue happiness.

## **We believe in strengthening democracy:**

It is the shared responsibility of a nation to ensure each citizen's freedom, security and equality. Through government, we honor our responsibility to promote the common good.

Government must be transparent, accessible and open to all citizens who wish to oversee its workings and share in its benefits.

America must work to enhance the democratic process by ensuring an educated citizenry, equal opportunity for influence, honest public debate, competitive elections and robust civic participation.

A healthy democracy requires tireless vigilance against corruption and abuses of power, and a government that is accountable to its people.

## **We believe in promoting progress:**

We must promote innovation and entrepreneurship, cultivate the arts and sciences, and ensure a quality education for everyone. When we invest in individual potential, the benefits are shared by all.

America must continue to be a welcoming home to all people. We believe that diversity of faith, culture and perspective enriches our nation.

America must keep a watchful eye on the economy to ensure fairness, transparency and genuine opportunity for all.

Each generation has a duty to protect and improve those resources we hold in common—our community spaces, our public institutions and our natural environment.

## **We believe in embracing leadership:**

America's security requires an effective military and a commitment to enduring alliances, but we must remember that America's true power is found in its wisdom as well as its strength.

Our security and prosperity rely on the security and prosperity of people throughout the world. By helping others, we will help ourselves.

America must join with other nations to build global institutions that protect the vulnerable, promote democratic self-government, and improve the health and welfare of all people throughout the world.

America must never suspend its belief in democracy and human rights in the pursuit of its global objectives. Noble ends require nothing short of noble means.

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As progressives, these are our guiding principles—to defend dignity, to strengthen democracy, to promote progress and to embrace leadership. We believe that our country must always be looking toward a better and brighter future for all people, and in this pursuit we pledge to come forward and work with whomever we can. We will fight for these principles in every community, every forum and every office of government, because the struggles of this new century will not only be about preserving the freedoms we already enjoy—they will be about expanding those freedoms for all people.