

Dear Vice President Joe Biden,

We write to you as leaders from a diverse array of organizations building political power for young people in the United States. We are all deeply committed to ending a presidency that has set the clock back on all of the issues that impact our lives.

While you are now the presumptive Democratic nominee, it is clear that you were unable to win the votes of the vast majority of voters under 45 years old during the primary. With young people poised to play a critical role deciding the next President, you need to have more young people enthusiastically supporting and campaigning with you to defeat Trump. This division must be reconciled so we can unite the party to defeat Trump.

Messaging around a "return to normalcy" does not and has not earned the support and trust of voters from our generation. For so many young people, going back to the way things were "before Trump" isn't a motivating enough reason to cast a ballot in November. And now, the coronavirus pandemic has exposed not only the failure of Trump, but how decades of policymaking has failed to create a robust social safety net for the vast majority of Americans.

The views of younger Americans are the result of a series of crises that took hold when we came of political age, and flow from bad decisions made by those in power from both major parties. For millions of young people, our path to a safe and secure middle class life is far more out-of-reach than it was for our parents or grandparents. We grew up in a world where "doing better than the generation before us" was not a foregone conclusion.

Instead, we grew up with endless war, skyrocketing inequality, crushing student loan debt, mass deportations, police murders of black Americans and mass incarceration, schools which have become killing fields, and knowing that the political leaders of today are choking the planet we will live on long after they are gone. We've spent our whole lives witnessing our political leaders prioritize the voices of wealthy lobbyists and big corporations over our needs. From this hardship, we've powered a resurgence of social movements demanding fundamental change. Why would we want a return to normalcy? We need a vision for the future, not a return to the past.

New leadership in November is an imperative for everything our movements are fighting for. But in order to win up and down the ballot in November, the Democratic Party needs the energy and enthusiasm of our generation. The victorious "Obama coalition" included millions of energized young people fighting for change. But the Democratic Party's last presidential nominee failed to mobilize our enthusiasm where it mattered. We can't afford to see those mistakes repeated.

Young people are issues-first voters. Fewer identify with a political party than any other generation. Exclusively anti-Trump messaging won't be enough to lead any candidate to victory. We need you to champion the bold ideas that have galvanized our generation and given us hope

in the political process. As the party's nominee, the following commitments are needed to earn the support of our generation and unite the party for a general election against Donald Trump:

Policy:

- **CLIMATE CHANGE:** Adopt the frameworks of the Green New Deal and make specific commitments around achieving a just transition to 100% Clean Energy by 2030 for electricity, buildings, and transportation; restart the economy by committing to mobilizing \$10 trillion in green stimulus and infrastructure investments over 10 years that will create tens of millions of good jobs of the future; and commit to take on and prosecute the fossil fuel executives and lobbyists who have criminally jeopardized our generation.
- **GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION:** Take an intersectional, comprehensive approach to preventing gun violence with the goal of reducing gun deaths by 50% in ten years. In addition to the policies laid out in your plan, you should also include the following from the Peace Plan for a Safer America: call for a federal licensing program; hold the gun industry accountable by directing the IRS to probe the NRA's non-profit status. Expand federal funding and resources for community based violence intervention programs. Adopt Julian Castro's People First Policing Plan and acknowledge that police brutality is gun violence.
- **IMMIGRATION:** Commit to immediate executive actions to expand DACA and other policies to protect people from deportation and hold ICE and CBP accountable. Executive actions must also close the vast and cruel web of detention camps and not replace it with a practice of tagging people with electronic monitors or surveillance sold by big money corporations. Commit to ending the collaboration between local police and ICE and the use of racial profiling by deportation agents and local police that pulls people into the deportation pipeline. Commit to providing guaranteed access to counsel for all while making immigration courts independent and free of political manipulation. Commit to repealing 1996 immigration reform laws and creating citizenship pathways for all undocumented people with harmful provisions. Amidst the current Covid-19 pandemic, it is clear that all people, including undocumented immigrants, must be included in any health care reform as viruses do not discriminate on the basis of immigration status.
- **HEALTH CARE:** Support the Affordable Drug Manufacturing Act to allow the government to manufacture generic versions of drugs and dramatically lower prescription drug prices. Support Medicare for All, especially in light of the coronavirus pandemic. Champion the repeal of the Hyde Amendment and people's ability to access abortion care regardless of their income or zip code.
- **CRIMINALIZATION:** Champion comprehensive reform of our criminal legal system. Incentivize states to cut their incarcerated population by 50 percent while supporting massive investment in housing, drug treatment, diversion, education and health programs. End the War on Drugs and support the equitable legalization of marijuana based on proposals laid out by Senator Booker, Senator Warren, Senator Sanders, Secretary Castro, and others.

- **EDUCATION:** Support free undergraduate tuition for public colleges, universities, and vocational schools for all students, regardless of income, citizenship status, or criminal record. Provide economic relief to 45 million Americans and stimulate the economy by addressing the student debt crisis and canceling the entire \$1.7 trillion in student loan debt.
- **WEALTH TAX:** Support an annual tax on the extreme wealth of the wealthiest 180,000 households in America who are in the top 0.1 percent based on proposals laid out by Senator Sanders, Senator Warren, and Tom Steyer.
- **FOREIGN POLICY:** Commit to seek Congressional approval on any authorization of war and support repeal of 2001 and 2002 Authorization for Use of Military Force.
- **DEMOCRACY:** Support the elimination of the filibuster and the expanding of the Supreme Court. Call for the adoption of strong anti-corruption reforms laid out by Senator Warren and Senator Sanders. Champion a voting system that works for all Americans. Every citizen should be automatically registered to vote, get to cast their ballot in a secure, accessible way that fits their needs, and never have their right to vote taken away for any reason. Get big money out of politics and make the passage of HR 1 a top priority.

Personnel and Future Administration:

- Commit to appointing progressive elected officials who endorsed Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren as Transition Co-Chairs, such as Representatives Ro Khanna, Pramila Jayapal, Ayanna Pressley, or Katie Porter.
- Pledge to appoint zero current or former Wall Street executives or corporate lobbyists, or people affiliated with the fossil fuel, health insurance or private prison corporations, to your transition team, advisor roles, or cabinet.
- Appoint a trusted progressive to lead the White House Presidential Personnel Office to ensure that the entire administration is free of corruption and staffed with public servants committed to advancing a progressive agenda.
- Commit to put trusted voices on issues of importance to our generation on your campaign and transition team's policy working groups, such as Governor Inslee's policy team on climate; Senator Warren's policy team on financial regulation; Aramis Ayala, Bryan Stevenson, and Larry Krasner on criminal justice; Bonnie Castillo of National Nurses United and Dr. Abdul El-Sayed on health care; and Mary-Kay Henry, Sara Nelson, and Senator Sanders' policy team on jobs and the economy.
- Commit to appointing advisors, such as Joseph Stiglitz, to your National Economic Council and Office of Management and Budget who believe in the principles of the Green New Deal and a rapid transition to a 100% clean and renewable energy economy
- Appoint a National Director of Gun Violence Prevention in the White House who will oversee the policy platform, coordinate across agencies, and incorporate a survivor-centered approach. Commit to appointing an Attorney General who will re-examine the Heller decision.
- Appoint a DHS Secretary committed to holding ICE and CBP agents accountable and dismantling ICE and CBP as we know them.

- Create a White House Commission to represent the voices and needs of immigrants who can work together to ensure that executive actions and legislative solutions address the needs of immigrant communities.
- Create a Task Force on Young Americans at the White House focused on the many issues unique to the next generation's health, wellbeing, and economic stability. The leadership of the office should directly report to the President and work regularly with the Domestic Policy Council, National Economic Council, and Office of Public Engagement. Taskforce representatives from each agency should be appointed by and report to respective Secretaries and taskforce leadership and focus on policy and administrative action that directly affects every aspect of young people's lives. This office should engage directly with young people across the country and ensure representation from youth movement leaders in its ranks.

In addition to these policy and personnel commitments, you and your campaign must demonstrate a real passion and enthusiasm for engaging with our generation and its leaders. It's not just about the policies and issues, but also about how you prioritize them, how you talk about them, and how you demonstrate real passion for addressing them. You must demonstrate, authentically, that you empathize with our generation's struggles.

Calling for solutions that match the scale, scope, and urgency of the problems we are facing is not radical. If nothing else, this moment of crisis should show that it is the pragmatic thing to do. We want results and we're leading some of the movements that will help deliver them.

The organizations below will spend more than \$100 million communicating with more than 10 million young members, supporters, and potential voters this election cycle. We are uniquely suited to help mobilize our communities, but we need help ensuring our efforts will be backed-up by a campaign that speaks to our generation. Our generation is the future of this country. If you aim to motivate, mobilize, and welcome us in, we will work tirelessly to align this nation with its highest ideals.

Signed,

[Alliance for Youth Action](#)

[Justice Democrats](#)

[IfNotNow Movement](#)

[March for Our Lives Action Fund](#)

[NextGen America](#)

[Student Action](#)

[Sunrise Movement](#)

[United We Dream Action](#)