



Woman's National Democratic Club



**Public Policy and Political Action
Committee Positions in Brief**



THE WOMAN'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB

The Woman's National Democratic Club was founded in 1922, two years after women gained the right to vote. The mission of the WNDC is to provide a forum where Democrats meet to study, discuss, and act upon current issues to further the participation of women and men in the political process and to help build an effective and compassionate political party.

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The actions of the Public Policy and Political Action Committee include the following:

- Advocating WNDC policy positions to Congress and the Administration
- Advocating the role of women in the political process, including issues such as economic and political equity
- Actively supporting Democratic candidates for public office
- Coordinating activities with the Democratic National Committee and with political and other organizations that support our principles and positions
- Circulating WNDC positions to all members
- Informing the media of WNDC positions

The current Public Policy Committee positions focus on six areas:

- Democracy and Human Rights
- Education
- Environment
- Health
- Gun Violence Prevention
- National Security

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WNDC PUBLIC POLICY AND POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Positions on Democracy and Human Rights

WNDC believes that in a democracy, the government should be accountable to all people within its jurisdiction. We hold that shared values and strong institutions are essential to ensure accountability. Fundamental to preserving our democracy and the integrity of our established institutions and norms is our Founding Fathers' plan to control government's power by establishing three co-equal branches of government. We support a continuing effort to become a more perfect union, reaffirming and strengthening the principle of equality under the law, the universal right to vote, freedoms of speech and worship, and freedom from discrimination. We support these values and principles for our own democracy and for democratic governments around the world.

WNDC calls for policymakers to:

- Introduce legislation and support efforts to build and strengthen alliances with other democracies worldwide to protect and advance our shared democratic interests and our support for preserving and expanding NATO.
- Ensure a fair and credible nomination and confirmation process for the appointment of fully qualified judges to the federal courts.
- Fix the broken campaign finance system established by the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, which opened the door for special-interest, big-money donors to influence elections without transparency and accountability, and which in turn has led to inequities in the political process.
- Reform the Electoral College to better reflect the democratic process and the will of the people as reflected in their votes.
- Safeguard voters' rights with comprehensive federal laws invoking strict punishment and penalties for interfering with election results, including protection of election poll workers and election officials who are harassed, threatened, and harmed while exercising their civic duties.
- Pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.



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Positions on Democracy and Human Rights (Continued)

- End partisan gerrymandering by ensuring that nonpartisan commissions draw the lines that delineate congressional districts.
- Designate Election Day as a federal holiday.
- Require civics to be taught in schools at all grade levels so that students understand the meaning of democracy, how government works, and the importance of voting and other civic engagement.
- Pass comprehensive immigration reform legislation, including: expediting processing for those eligible under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA); creating a path to citizenship for undocumented individuals currently in the country who pass background checks; improving the efficiency and timelines of the asylum process; providing oversight of the border to ensure the humanitarian treatment of migrants; and allocating adequate funding to the federal agencies responsible for the implementation of these immigration programs.
- Respect the country's tradition of the peaceful transition of power. Uphold officeholders' oaths to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and vocally oppose challenges to democracy.
- Speak out against ideologically motivated actions, such as banning books or rewriting history, that threaten select segments of our society, including people of color, the LGBTQ+ community, and immigrants.
- Enact statehood for the District of Columbia so that its citizens can at last have full and equal representation in Congress and the rights of self-determination.



WNDC PUBLIC POLICY AND POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Positions on Education

WNDC believes that public education is one of the cornerstones of American democracy. Historically, the role of public education has been to teach students knowledge, skills, and values. Today, investments in education are even more crucial to provide our students with the tools to help our nation effectively compete in the global economy. WNDC supports actions by government agencies, including offices such as the states' secretaries of state, to improve the ability of our citizens to understand and participate in the democratic process.

WNDC calls for policymakers to:

- Provide civic education for all and support efforts to provide timely and necessary information on public policy, with a particular emphasis on outreach to high school students who will soon receive the right to vote.
- Support efforts to improve equity and efficiency in public schools and to help future generations enjoy economic success. The US lags behind a number of other developed nations in academic achievement at the primary and secondary education levels. Fund programs that help children succeed academically as well as personally, from preschool through college. Such programs may include those related to consumer finance and health that improve the quality of life for many.
- Increase enrollment in high-quality early learning programs, such as Head Start, which have been shown to benefit both participants and communities.
- Support research to determine best practices to improve educational outcomes.
- Support high-quality public education for all students irrespective of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or school district where they live. Oppose the privatization and destabilization of public schools.
- Oppose threats that limit access to books, including textbooks that provide comprehensive fact-based information on American history.



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Positions on Education

(continued)

- Support efforts to end structural racism in education, which include increasing funding parity between poor and wealthy school districts, creating a more equitable distribution of public funds, and supporting reforms to decrease the segregation of schools through measures such as revised school boundaries or equitable access to advanced courses of study.
- Fund programs that nurture social and emotional development, interpersonal skills, and other learning mindsets that increase overall achievement.
- Support efforts to improve how colleges respond to allegations of sexual assault.
- Support efforts to increase the pool of teachers, particularly among diverse populations, to realize the positive effect of diversity on student achievement. Fund teacher salaries at a level that is adequate to relieve current and projected teacher shortages.
- Improve the overall school climate, for example, by encouraging peaceful conflict resolution, discouraging bullying, and limiting punitive disciplinary practices against students and school professionals.
- Fully fund programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to ensure that students with disabilities have access to free and appropriate services that meet their individual needs.
- Protect students from for-profit school scams, such as through debt-forgiveness programs and gainful employment rules. Support regulations that increase accountability from these institutions.
- Continue to support the separation of church and state in funding decisions.



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Positions on Environment

WNDC believes that all human beings have a right to clean air, clean water, and healthy surroundings. Racial minorities experience unequally severe impacts on their health and economic well-being from air and water pollution and from natural disasters resulting from climate instability. We believe that climate emergencies are a human-caused threat to all life on Earth, and that climate-related disasters are causing the disproportionate suffering of poorer nations and communities.

WNDC calls for policymakers to:

- Combat the racial injustice inherent in the industrial and agricultural practices feeding climate change and the pollution of air, water, and soil that most severely affects communities of color.
- Provide full funding for the Environmental Protection Agency and other environmental agencies at all levels of government, including funding for research and development in clean energy, ensuring that these agencies are sufficiently staffed with peer-recognized scientists and other experts in the field.
- Support international cooperative efforts to reduce air and water pollution, increase sustainable farming methods, increase water conservation, protect biodiversity, and assist poorer countries in mitigating the harmful effects of climate destabilization.
- Enforce strong standards for reducing carbon emissions.
- Continue to provide funds for transitions to renewable sources for meeting all energy needs.
- Support the goal of transitioning to 100% renewable energy sources by 2040 or sooner for electric power and transportation.
- Fund training for an expanded and diverse green energy workforce, including programs that enable workers in fossil fuel industries to transition to well-paying jobs in the new green industries.

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Positions on Environment (Continued)

- Collaborate with communities of color in the fight for a healthy environment and for robust measures to counter toxins from polluting industries and forms of transportation.
- Improve energy efficiency in private and public buildings and appliances and support the transformation of American manufacturing to be the cleanest and most efficient in the world.
- Enact and support regulatory frameworks that include strong safeguards on hydraulic fracturing, strengthened safe drinking water and clean air standards and regulations, and updated fuel economy standards for all vehicles. Support transitioning to electrically powered public transit, trucks, and private vehicles, including funding and widespread installation of charging facilities available to everyone.
- Promote growth in energy-producing communities and distribute energy grids.



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Positions on Health

WNDC believes that access to comprehensive health care is a basic human right. Every person in America is entitled to the full range of science-based health care services, regardless of their race, skin color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, or ability to pay. Health care must encompass all stages of life from birth to death.

WNDC calls for policymakers to:

- Protect and support the Affordable Care Act (ACA).
- Encourage the adoption of standards of reproductive care that include the full range of contraceptive choices and services for pregnancy, prenatal, and birthing care or the termination of a pregnancy.
- Oppose all legislation and executive orders that might enable any health care provider serving in any taxpayer funded facility to refuse care to any person for any reason.
- Continue full U.S. membership in the World Health Organization and funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to enable fulfillment of their roles in monitoring and updating treatment standards for all causes of mortality and morbidity, including workplace hazards, gun violence, and environmental toxins.
- Commit to supporting global efforts to seek an improved, shared system for early warning and rapid response to emerging biological threats.
- Maintain full funding for health care services for veterans and eligible family members.
- Commit to adequate funding for Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security.

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Positions on Health

(continued)

- Enact legislation to protect health care providers from being forced to share confidential medical information with any government entity or employer without the express approval of the patient or their legal guardian.
- Mandate that every woman's health care agency that receives federal funding follow the medical guidelines of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG), and deny funding to so-called "crisis pregnancy counseling centers" that only provide anti-abortion dogma, e.g., claims that abortion increases the risk for infertility, breast cancer, and depression.

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Positions on Gun Violence Prevention

WNDC recognizes that the United States has a national crisis due to gun violence. Violence and deaths from guns dramatically increased in many areas of the country in 2023. Gun violence is the leading cause of death for American children and teens, and the number of suicides by firearm is up. All forms of gun violence are increasing, including shootings in elementary schools. Mass shootings reached a record high in 2023.

Women in the U.S. are far more likely to be killed with a gun than women in other developed countries. Recent data shows that, every month, an average of 70 women in the U.S. are shot and killed by an intimate partner, and many more are wounded. Children are afraid to go to school, and people avoid crowds and are afraid to go out at night because of the high risk of gun violence.

It's not the way we want to live. Together we can create a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to reducing gun violence.

WNDC calls for policymakers to:

- Strengthen and enforce gun control laws that include background checks, licenses, and waiting periods for purchasing a gun.
- Introduce and implement a nationwide ban on assault weapons and attachable devices that intensify the firing rate.
- Promote educational campaigns for the safe storage and handling of legally owned guns.
- Improve access to mental health services and support for individuals at risk of engaging in violent behavior.
- Fund the development and implementation of conflict resolution programs in schools, workplaces, and communities.
- Foster a sense of community and social cohesion to reduce feelings of isolation and alienation that can lead to gun violence.
- Strengthen laws and support systems to protect victims of domestic violence.



Positions on Gun Violence Prevention (continued)

- Enhance community policing efforts to build trust and cooperation between law enforcement and the communities they serve.
- Invest in research on the causes and consequences of gun violence to improve policies through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention.
- Support and engage with advocacy organizations that work to promote sensible gun violence prevention measures.

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Positions on National Security

WNDC believes that the national security of the United States and the well-being of all our citizens depend on the robust use of our diplomatic, economic, informational, and military capabilities to strengthen and protect democratic alliances, nations, and values throughout the world. At this moment of testing of international peace and security, the power and purpose of U.S. diplomacy must focus on marshalling alliances and partnerships to stand up to aggression and to uphold the principles that have underpinned global peace and prosperity for decades. These foreign policy capabilities, in turn, are dependent on the domestic renewal and strengthening of our own democratic institutions and values.

WNDC, for its part, will serve as a forum for a vigorous but civil debate on the best ways forward to deal effectively with the ever-increasing challenges posed by transnational threats: climate crises, global health emergencies, attempts by revisionist powers to change borders, international economic inequalities, refugee flows, and revolutionary digital information technologies.

The WNDC calls for policymakers to:

- Lead by example and by participating in global forums, and reinforce democratic values at home and abroad, working with our partners and allies to show that democracies deliver for our citizens and for each other.
- Introduce and support legislation to build and strengthen alliances with other democracies worldwide to protect and advance our shared interests—in particular to fund ongoing reinforcement for Ukraine, support a sustainable and just peace in the Middle East, provide support to preserve and expand NATO, and to further cooperation with Asian allies in the face of expansionism by the People's Republic of China (PRC).
- Strengthen global health security to better prevent, detect, and respond to future pandemics—because none of us will be safe until all of us are safe.

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Positions on National Security (Continued)

- Ensure the effective and timely adjudication of applications from asylum-seekers and others attempting to immigrate to the United States.
- Build on the success of the Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act to support actions to meliorate the climate crisis, an existential threat increasingly impacting American communities that can be met only through concerted global action led by the United States. This will include investing in climate resilience and green energy here at home and abroad and leading a global effort to reduce carbon pollution.
- Pass legislation to promote secure and resilient supply chains, lead internationally to push back against unfair trade practices, and build a more stable, inclusive global economy.
- Work with the departments of State and Commerce and the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to shape the rules and standards that will govern emerging critical technologies like artificial intelligence so that they serve U.S. interests, secure our competitive edge, and uphold American values.