

11 - Human Services

As a caring community, we must provide a safety net of social services that meets the basic needs of people, especially those on the margins of society, so they can attain their full potential.

We believe:

- Our government must accept its responsibility to provide a safety net of social services to meet people's needs regardless of their national or racial origin;
- Compassionate human services should be among the highest priorities of government, especially for those on the margins of society, such as the children, elderly, impoverished, homeless, mentally ill, disabled or those with chemical dependency,
- In supporting and strengthening family and community services for people with developmental disabilities, and increasing program flexibility to facilitate integration into the community;
- Public assistance is necessary to safeguard the vulnerable poor and people with disabilities who cannot reasonably provide for themselves;
- The only genuine welfare reform is one that reduces poverty, not just the welfare rolls.

We call for:

- Adequate funding for social services, including mental health and substance abuse treatment;
- An end to homelessness, and ensuring that all people have access to safe, affordable housing, including shelters and low-income housing for those unable to work. We support weighting affordable housing programs toward those who need them most;
- Affordable workforce housing programs, especially those targeting workers earning between minimum wage and a living wage in order to avoid competing with marketplace housing;
- Separating social services from faith-based requirements;
- A transitional plan for persons being released from state institutions;
- Improved oversight of elder-care;
- Restructuring and adequately funding the foster care system as a means to prevent child abuse and neglect.

We oppose:

- Increased privatization of public social services.