

## 14 - Law and the Justice System

The rule of law is a prerequisite for a democratic civil society. A responsible government provides safety, security and justice for all, with fairness and respect for the individual.

### **We believe:**

- All persons are equal before the law, and criminal justice must be linked to human rights;
- Liberty and justice for all includes everyone within the borders of the United States;
- In alleviating the conditions closely linked to crime and violence, by investing in nonviolent conflict resolution, education, youth programs, health care, social services, and living wage jobs;
- Asset seizures should be based on court conviction rather than mere arrest or presumption of guilt;
- In drug courts and a new approach to drug abuse focused on treatment and education rather than incarceration;
- In the stringent enforcement and supplementation of state and federal laws regulating the purchase and ownership of firearms that adequately address public safety concerns and the responsibility of gun owners, while respecting their ownership rights;
- In adequate state funding for indigent defendants in criminal cases;
- In DNA testing to free the innocent and convict the guilty;
- In eliminating mandatory minimum sentences and Three Strikes sentencing;
- The criminal justice system should emphasize prevention and rehabilitation over incarceration alone. Prisons should provide inmates with education, training, therapy, and meaningful work;
- The criminal justice system is the appropriate venue for prosecution of all violent crimes;
- In enforcement of laws that provide for humane treatment of animals.

### **We call for:**

- Ending the “war on drugs”, and subjecting use of marijuana and hemp to reasonable regulation and taxation;
- Eliminating all forms of racial profiling by law enforcement and in sentencing;
- Restoring habeas corpus for citizens and non-citizens, completely and without compromise;

- 40 • Research, legislation and enforcement measures to address the current racial  
41 disparity between persons of color in prison and their proportion in the state  
42 population;
- 43 • Independent investigation and prosecution of any government officer  
44 responsible for ordering or participating in violations of law;
- 45 • Abolition of capital punishment;
- 46 • Accountability in law enforcement through an effective review process that is  
47 independent, open, responsive and thorough, and that includes meaningful  
48 civilian participation;
- 49 • Restoring FBI funding to investigate white collar crime;
- 50 • Adequate punishments for white collar crime, including appropriate fines  
51 and jail time;
- 52 • Ending the privatization of prisons;
- 53 • Full funding of the Violence Against Women Act, services to crime victims,  
54 and programs to prevent sexual violence;
- 55 • The creation and funding of mental health courts to address the unique needs  
56 of offenders who have a mental illness or are developmentally delayed.