

United States President

THE ISSUES

JOE BIDEN

DEMOCRAT



DONALD TRUMP

REPUBLICAN • INCUMBENT

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AFFORDABLE CARE ACT Support Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare? Support a public option?	Yes. Wants public option “like Medicare” to “build on the Affordable Care Act.” Raise subsidies and tax credits to lower premiums.	No on both. “Terminate” Obamacare and “replace with a plan that’s far better.” Filed Supreme Court brief to overturn .
CAMPAIGN FINANCE Limit campaign contributions? Support public funding and expanded disclosure?	Yes. Eliminate all private donations from federal elections; replace solely by public funding . Would expand required disclosure.	No. Dislikes using taxpayer money for public funding. Opposed House bill that supported it and expanded disclosure rules.
CLIMATE CHANGE Is human-caused climate change a serious threat? Limit greenhouse gases or fund renewable energy?	Yes. “An existential threat.” Rejoin Paris Climate Agreement to limit emissions. Introduced \$2 trillion plan to boost clean energy and rebuild infrastructure .	No. “Don’t know that it’s manmade.” Climate scientists have “political agenda” risking “millions of jobs.” Cut renewables funding . Withdrew U.S. from Paris Agreement.
COURTS—SUPREME COURT Pick Ruth Bader Ginsburg replacement now or let November winner choose?	Wait for next president. Doing so now is “A gigantic mistake and abuse of power.” See CEEP Supreme Court Guide .	Replace now. Thinks election will “end up in the Supreme Court,” so fill the vacancy now. See CEEP Supreme Court Guide .
COVID-19 Plan for dealing with COVID? Support Trump withdrawal from World Health Organization (WHO)?	Emergency paid leave for all affected, more testing, strong federal response, wearing masks, and strengthening social distancing . Opposed WHO withdrawal: “Strengthening global health” makes Americans safer. Says Trump “quit on this country.”	States must take main responsibility for testing . Opposes mandatory masks . Invest in developing vaccines . Ban on China flights saved “thousands and thousands” of lives. WHO “failed to make the requested and greatly needed reforms.”
COVID CRISIS – ECONOMIC RESPONSE What should COVID stimulus bills prioritize?	Much bigger stimulus, with aid to states and cities . Supports “trillion-dollar infrastructure program,” with tougher conditions on business bailouts and focus on small business and essential workers .	Reduce capital gains and payroll taxes , limit business liability. Three-month student loan deferral . Opposes congressional oversight of stimulus bailouts . Payments to workers should include “incentive to work.”
EDUCATION Support free (or highly subsidized) public college tuition or loan forgiveness for low-income students?	Yes . Two years free community college. Free public 4-year college if families make below \$125,000. Cover student-debt payments for public college and some others if earning under \$125,000, max payment 5% of income .	Unclear. Proposed deep cuts to federal financial aid programs and ending public service loan forgiveness. Proposed borrowers pay 12.5% of discretionary yearly income with loans forgiven after 15-25 years.
ENVIRONMENT Tighten or loosen environmental protections?	Tighten. Rescind permit for Keystone pipeline . Preserve and implement Clean Air Act , and ban new drilling on public lands. Let existing fracking continue .	Loosen environmental review laws . Supports EPA cutbacks and Keystone pipeline . “We are reclaiming America’s proud heritage as a nation of builders.”
GUN LAWS More restrictive legislation on guns? Stricter background checks and bans on assault rifles?	Yes. Gun violence is a “public health epidemic.” Ban assault rifles and high-capacity magazines; background checks for all gun sales .	Mostly no . Said would support background checks . Later opposed House bill mandating them . Rescinded rule stopping mentally impaired from owning firearms.

ISSUES	BIDEN (D)	TRUMP (R)
IMMIGRATION Path to citizenship for 11 million undocumented residents, including DACA participants brought to U.S. as children? Position on border walls and limiting asylum?	Yes. Reinstates DACA program. Supports “roadmap to legal status and citizenship for unauthorized immigrants.” “Building a wall will do little to deter criminals and cartels seeking to exploit our borders.” “Modernize” immigration, allow more total visas.	No. Tried to end DACA program; overruled by Supreme Court . Said would veto DACA path to citizenship. Earlier said might support as part of broader deal. Declared national emergency to pay for border wall . Tightened legal immigration and asylum limits.
IRAN Support Trump withdrawal from Iran nuclear treaty? Require congressional approval for military to attack Iran?	Oppose withdrawal. “No illusions” on Iran, but diplomacy is “only way out.” Trump lacks authority to launch attacks. Backs relief from sanctions during pandemic.	Yes. Withdrawn from treaty . Imposed sanctions . Ordered killing of Iranian general in Iraq . Vetoed requiring congressional authorization for military attack.
LABOR Support “right-to-work” laws, banning unions from mandating dues for workers they represent?	No. Repeal Taft-Hartley provisions that let states impose right-to-work laws . Penalize “companies that interfere with workers’ organizing efforts.”	Yes. Supports right-to-work laws as creating more flexibility. Issued order making it easier to fire federal employees . Revoked Obama order tightening wage and hour rules .
LEGAL ABORTION Keep legal or ban?	Legal. Supports “right to choose.” “Codify Roe v. Wade” into law. Until 2019, backed existing federal abortion funding ban.	Ban. “Strongly pro-life.” First president to attend March for Life . Promised to appoint justices to overturn Roe v. Wade .
LGBTQ RIGHTS Support protection from discrimination in employment, education, adoption, credit, housing, and public services.	Yes. First supported gay marriage in 2012 . “Protect LGBTQ+ people from discrimination.” Supports Equality Act to give federal anti-discrimination protection .	No. Prohibiting job discrimination for sexual orientation was a “horrible” decision. Rolled back LGBTQ health care protections to protect religious freedom. Previously mixed .
MARIJUANA Decriminalize or keep illegal?	Decriminalize use . “Expunge all cannabis use convictions, end incarceration for drug use alone.” Don’t interfere with states. But doesn’t support full federal legalization .	Keep illegal. Rescinded rule preventing federal prosecutions in states where legal . Proposed removing medical marijuana protections .
MINIMUM WAGE Raise federal hourly minimum wage above current \$7.25?	Yes. “\$15 an hour minimum wage is long overdue.” Index to median hourly wage , with automatic minimum increases.	No. Threatened to veto \$15 minimum when House passed it .
PLANNED PARENTHOOD Can Planned Parenthood receive federal funds for non-abortion-related care?	Yes. Will restore federal funding to Planned Parenthood and other family-planning programs .	No. Blocked groups providing abortion referrals from receiving federal family-planning funds .
POLICE Restrict police use of force and increase public oversight? Position on sending federal law enforcement agents to cities against wishes of mayors and governors?	Yes. More community policing, ban chokeholds . Root out unlawful policing, systemic racism, prosecutorial misconduct. Doesn’t support defunding . Trump deployments furthered “chaos and division.”	No. Police are “under siege.” Cut back active federal oversight of excess force, though supported database to track it. Said deployment of federal agents was necessary to restore “law and order.”
SOCIAL SECURITY Partly privatize Social Security or raise retirement age to stabilize program?	No. Make Social Security solvent by adding new tax on high earners to match what middle class already pays . Expand benefits and reject privatization.	Unclear. Proposed \$35 billion cuts to Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income, with possible cuts to overall entitlements .
TAXES Raise or lower taxes on the wealthy and corporations?	Raise corporate tax and capital gains rates . “Get rid of” most of “Trump’s \$2 trillion tax cut,” which wealthy people “don’t need.”	Lower. “Historic tax cut ... unleashing economic growth and jobs” that gave “relief for hard-working Americans.”
VOTING RULES Strict ID and other rules to combat possible fraud, even if limit access?	No. Restore Voting Rights Act . Challenge state laws limiting voting rights. Support automatic and same-day voter registration.	Yes. Seeks stronger voter ID requirements . Voter ID opponents “intend to cheat.”

Editor’s note: Also see our [longer version](#) and [Green & Libertarian responses](#). [Campus Election Engagement Project](#) is a nonpartisan effort to help colleges engage students in elections. Sources include [Votesmart.org](#), [FactCheck.org](#), [Politifact.com](#) and candidate statements. [Vote411.org](#) and [Ballotready.org](#) offer guides to local races.