

# **The Report of the Clerk to the 2020 Nominating Convention**

## **Proposed Changes to the State Party Platform** offered by Georgia Greens since the 2019 East Point Convention for consideration at

The Nominating Convention of the Georgia Green Party  
at the Ted Wright Park building,  
2841 Moody Road, Bonaire, Houston County, Georgia,  
Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

respectfully submitted - - Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
v0.30, updated Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

### **ED#1: Economic Democracy – parental leave**

Hugh Esco (Fulton County), LeRoy Bartel (Chatham County) offers the following:

Amend the Economic Democracy plank, by inserting at the end, a new paragraph 9., to read:

“9. We support a requirement that employers in Georgia establish parental leave policies guaranteeing flexible hours and providing non-lapsing parental leave to be used at an employee's discretion for the fulfillment of their parental responsibilities, for each waged or salaried employed parent, when by birth, adoption or foster placement they assume responsibility for the custody of a child. We would index the length of such paid parental leave on the size of the employers' workforce, with those employing 1,000 or more full-time equivalent employees required to fund six months paid leave for each qualifying parent, and those employing at least twenty full-time equivalent employees required to fund at least one month of such leave. Additionally, such policies should provide to birthing mothers eight weeks of paid leave as may be recommended by a health care provider for the pre-natal and post-partum health needs of mother and child.”

**HR#2: Human Rights – Nordic Model, extend Safe Harbor Act**

Hugh Esco (Fulton County), Denice Traina (Richmond County), Kweku Lumumba (DeKalb County), LeRoy Bartel (Chatham County) offers the following:

Amend the Platform, by appending to the introductory language of the Human Rights plank, a new paragraph to read:

"We know that the mostly women in prostitution suffer post traumatic stress disorder at rates which rival those of combat veterans and torture victims, traumatic brain injuries at rates greater than pro football players, rapes, assaults, abuse, sexual harassment and degradation as an expected part of their day-to-day experience in this exploitative industry. The inspiring success (65%+ drop in its first eight years) of the Swedish Prostitution Reform Act of 1999 shows us that the abolition of the exploitation of prostitution is possible. Commonly known these days as the Nordic Model, sometimes as the Equality Model, researchers in Sweden have shown that by protecting those victimized by commercial sexual exploitation from prosecution, while funding the social services sufficient to a meaningful exit strategy for the 89% who tell researchers they want to leave the industry, while prosecuting traffickers, pimps and panderers, it is possible to drastically reduce the carnage of this exploitative industry."

Amend the Human Rights plank further, by inserting at the end, a new paragraph, to read:

"#. Greens support a goal of abolishing prostitution, with the adoption of Nordic-Model inspired reforms which: (1) criminalize pimping and pandering, (2) protect those prostituted by the industry from prosecution, (3) offers survivors social support sufficient to an exit strategy, and (4) leverage public educational resources to address mens' sense of entitlement to sexual access to women's bodies. We advocate immediate reform of Georgia's Safe Harbor Act, to provide for a presumption that anyone engaged in prostitution or solicitation under state statute and related local ordinances was indeed acting under 'coercion or deception'; and ought as a consequence of that presumption, to be protected from prosecution. We urge increased fines and fees, already authorized for the existing Safe Harbor for Sexually Exploited Children Fund to accommodate the larger client base for social services which these changes will generate, to build new capacity for the battered women's shelters and other social services necessary to facilitate an effective exit from the industry. We urge that the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council develop new protocols and retrain law enforcement officers across the state to treat the mostly women and children involved in prostitution as victims of criminal exploitation rather than as criminal suspects."

### **HR#3: Human Rights – Endorse Declaration on the Sex-Based Rights of Women**

Hugh Esco (Fulton County), Denice Traina (Richmond County), Kweku Lumumba (DeKalb County) offers the following:

Amend the Platform, by appending to the introductory language of the Human Rights plank, two new paragraphs to read:

"We believe that it is possible for responsible policy makers to weigh the conflicts between existing law and the demands of those campaigning for the legal protections of trans-identified individuals, and to find nuanced approaches which will protect the latter without gutting from the former the gains that women have made for the protection of the sex-based rights of women under the law."

"We are extremely concerned for the questionable medical ethics at play when children, incapable for fully informed consent, are subject to medical interventions under so-called gender-affirming protocols, involving puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and so-called sex-reassignment surgeries. The lack of peer reviewed research to support such protocols; the well documented list of adverse side effects associated with these protocols; the many scientific studies which tell us that dysphoric distress including mental anguish and self-harming ideation is so often not resolved by these medical interventions; the additional scientific studies which report that gender dysphoria generally resolves itself by the late teens for 80% or more of Early Onset patients under a protocol of watchful waiting; and the growing number of young adults who have chosen to detransition, even after their health has been compromised and their reproductive systems have been left sterile by medical interventions; all of these factors urge caution in the rush to transition the gender of children with medical experimentation. Such practices have been said to '(bind) children to traditional gender stereotypes, and (to) medically (harm) them through life-changing irreversible procedures'."

Amend the Human Rights plank further, by inserting at the end, a new paragraph, to read:

"#. The Georgia Green Party here endorses the Declaration on Women's Sex-Based Rights, as developed and publicized by the Womens Human Rights Campaign, and encourage our members, our national party, policy makers and the general public to do the same. We will regulate access to gender-affirming therapies to protect Georgia children from medical experimentation, prosecuting ethical violations involved with subjecting children incapable of fully informed consent to such life-changing and irreversible procedures. We will protect womens and girls from unfair competition in sports by male bodied athletes. We will protect girls and women in the enjoyment of female-only facilities, programs, or services, particularly in places where women have a need to be in a state of undress, or where their privacy may be compromised or their safety may be at risk from male-pattern violence."

#### **HR#4: Human Rights – Endorse FiST's Feminist Amendments to the Equality Act**

Hugh Esco (Fulton County), Denice Traina (Richmond County), Kweku Lumumba (DeKalb County) offers the following:

Amend the Platform, by appending to the introductory language of the Human Rights plank, a new paragraph to read:

"Efforts by advocates for the rights of trans-identified individuals have campaigned for the inclusion of 'gender-identity' as a protected class under existing civil rights law. Feminist organizers around the world have identified such policy demands as in conflict with the existing sex-based rights of women and have called for opposition to gender-identity protections which fail to account for the concerns of women. Elevating gender-identity on a par with sex as a protected class pits the established sex-rights of women against the demands for inclusion and protection by trans-identified persons. However, a prohibition of discrimination based on 'sex stereotypes' provides many important protections for trans-identified individuals without placing at risk the sex-based rights of women."

Amend the Human Rights plank further, by inserting at the end, a new paragraph, to read:

"#. The Georgia Green Party endorses passage of the Equality Act (HR-5 / SB-788, in the 116th Congress) as amended by the Feminist Amendment developed by FeministsStruggle.org intended to protect the sex-based rights of women while adding to existing Civil Rights statutes related to employment, housing, credit and jury service, two new protected classes to protect people from discrimination based on 'sexual orientation' and 'sex stereotyping'. We further support the adoption of similar state level reforms."

**CJ#5: Criminal Justice – Protect Workers from Slavery**

Kweku Lumumba (DeKalb County) offers the following:

Amend the Criminal Justice plank, by striking paragraph 6, related to “Protect Workers from Slavery”, in its entirety, inserting in its place a new paragraph 6., to read:

6. Protect Workers from Slavery

Prohibit private prisons from using inmate labor that would leave Georgians working in unsafe conditions for declining wages in competition with unpaid, inmate slave labor.

Amend the XIIIth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Article I. The Bill of Rights, Section I. The Rights of Persons, Paragraph XXII. Involuntary Servitude of the Constitution of the State of Georgia, in each case, to repeal the exception to the Constitutional prohibition against slavery and involuntary servitude.

### **CCC#5: Catastrophic Climate Crisis – add new plank**

Jimmy Cooper (Crawford County), Hugh Esco (Fulton County), Josh Prichett (Union County), John Fortuin (Clarke County) offers the following:

Amend the Platform of the Georgia Green Party, by adding a new entry to the table of contents, between the entries for ‘Auto Insurance’ and ‘Criminal Justice’, a new entry labeled ‘Catastrophic Climate Crisis’ providing it with an appropriate page number. Amend the Platform further, by inserting immediately after the plank related to ‘Auto Insurance’ and immediately prior to the plank related to ‘Criminal Justice’, a new plank to read:

#### **Catastrophic Climate Crisis**

*Capitalism may collapse because it does not allow the market to tell the ecological truth.  
Former Vice-President of Exxon Norway*

The solar energy hitting the Earth’s surface in an hour is sufficient to run the global economy for a year. Lester Brown, a founding member of the World Watch Institute, describes wind power as key to backing us out of our reliance on coal. Wind farms can be brought on line in a year. He believes that wind can supplant the 40% of domestic electric power generation, currently dependent on coal, with wind energy by 2020.

In a handful of months preceding this Party’s 2020 Convention, we have seen record temperatures in Antarctica, unprecedented shrinkage of the Arctic ice cap, an inferno of wildfires engulfing Australia. In recent years, we have witnessed wildfires ravaging California, a significant uptick of Category 5 Hurricanes pounding the Caribbean and the Gulf Coast, storm surges flooding Manhattan, dumping rains flooding communities deep inland in North Carolina, up and down the Mississippi River.

And yet still, too many public and private policy makers continue to deny and downplay the urgent warnings we have seen for decades, including recently the dire warnings by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, with its report: “Global Warming of 1.5° C”. This report informs us that if we do not take immediate action to reduce human induced global warming to keep it below 1.5° C, our planet will suffer irreversible damage, and “even temporarily overshooting 1.5° C may have irreversible impacts on our natural systems, including biodiversity loss or pushing past various [climate tipping points](#).”

The IPCC one-point-five-degree report advises us that we must take immediate action to remain below 1.5 °C global warming, which we are on pace to hit by 2030.

It has been estimated that the Pentagon consumes 2% of the domestic petroleum production. Barry Sanders, author of *The Green Zone: The Environmental Costs of Militarism*, “found that getting war casualty statistics out of the Department of Defense (DoD) is easier than getting fuel usage data.” The Paris accords finally reversed the Kyoto Agreements exception to reporting GHG emissions for the US military, but not the exemption of including such usage in reduction targets. But of course our nation agreed to neither, and is therefore not bound by either. Based on publicly available and likely incomplete data, the Brown’s Watson Institute recently estimated that in 2017, U.S. military operations were directly responsible for the emission of at least 59 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, but accounting for the industrial supply chain that number averages 153 million metric tons of carbon pollution annually, more than any except the 46 most fuel-hungry nations.

A tsunami swamping a reactor in Fukushima Japan has resulted in measurable fallout in Western North America and the irradiation of the Pacific Ocean. A meltdown at Chernobyl dropped fallout across Europe, irradiating that continent’s food supply. 31 first responders quickly succumbed to acute radiation poisoning. The surrounding red forest was bulldozed and buried in trenches. A massive concrete sarcophagus was built to contain the damaged reactor. A 1,000 square mile exclusion zone was designated. Local wildlife have high concentrations of cesium-137 in their body tissue. In the United States, a malfunction inside the reactor at Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania led to a release of radiative gasses accumulating inside the containment dome. These incidents and a large number of near misses have shown for years that nuclear power is not a safe or clean option for the generation of electricity.

The Eisenhower Administration pushed forward with his Atoms for Peace program, with the nuclear industry promising power too cheap to meter. In doing so it ignored the 1952 Paley Commission Report which recommended against pursuit of nuclear energy and urged ‘aggressive’ investments for a solar / wind / biomass conversion.

Calculating the carbon footprint of nuclear power production requires an examination of (1) nuclear reactor construction and (2) reactor operation, (3) the energy used for mining ore, (4) the cost of refining reactor fuel from that ore, (5) dismantling a decommissioned reactor and (6) waste disposal. Waste disposal is likely the largest unknown as nearly seventy years in, we still have no agreement what that looks like, and the long term nature of the commitment to dealing with spent fuels makes an accurate calculation most difficult. France seems to be the only nation willing to trust vitrification. In the US, most spent reactor fuel rods are still stored on-site in cooling ponds.

A pre-IPCC report of the UK's Committee on Climate Change recommended that to hit the targets it was then concerned with by 2030, that electric power generation should aim for a carbon footprint below 50 grams of carbon dioxide per kilowatt-hour. Large scale hydro costs roughly 10 gCO<sub>2</sub>, wind 34 gCO<sub>2</sub>, solar 50 gCO<sub>2</sub> (though those numbers are dropping fast with improving photo-voltaic efficiency). A recent literature review of three hundred papers on the carbon footprint of nuclear power found 19 with 'an acceptably rigorous scientific approach'. According to these 19 studies, the average carbon footprint for nuclear power is 66 gCO<sub>2</sub>/KwH. One paper put that figure as high as 200 gCO<sub>2</sub>.

Coal ash is a collective term for the waste material left over from coal-burning power plants. It contains hazardous materials such as arsenic, chromium, lead, radium, and mercury. US coal plants generate over 110 million tons of it every year. Even just short-term exposure to this material can have side effects. Long-term exposure can lead to a variety of cancers, heart problems and liver and kidney damage. It can cause brain damage in young or unborn children. There is no safe way to store it. Currently, most coal ash is mixed with water and stored in man-made ponds. These ponds often leak, contaminating groundwater and the surrounding area, or sometimes even break their banks, as seen in Tennessee in 2008 when the worst spill in history occurred. 1.5 million tons of coal ash was released when a dike on a storage pond broke, covering a 300 acre swath of land. As of 2019, 44 workers involved in the cleanup have died from the effects of coal ash and another 400 are sick or dying. Despite the threats coal ash poses to public health and the environment, the EPA has not classified coal ash as hazardous waste. In addition, the EPA under Trump recently proposed relaxing regulations on the containment of coal ash.

Hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking", is a process where energy companies drill deep into the earth to recover gas and oil from shale rock. After drilling, a pressurized stream of water, sand, and chemicals is injected to break apart the rock and release the gas or oil within the shale. In some wells propane, butane and oil are used in place of water. In addition, acids are sometimes injected to dissolve the rock. This activity has led to an increase in earthquake activity near and around fracking sites. Fracking also uses massive quantities of water, sometimes as much as 9.6 million gallons per well, which could be especially detrimental in areas that are already facing shortages of drinkable water. Fracking has been banned by a number of countries (e.g.- Ireland, France, Bulgaria, and Germany) as well as several US states, but these bans are often not extensive enough and still allow some fracking infrastructure to be built. Concerns have also been raised about the chemicals used in the fracking process and the impacts they have

had on public health and the environment. Some of the chemicals used are considered proprietary information. However, some of the chemicals used are known and have been found in water wells near fracking sites. These chemicals include ethane, methane, chromium-6 and benzene. These proprietary chemicals should be made known for the protection of public health and environmental safety.

Invasive insect populations worldwide have been increasing with a rise in global temperatures. This has led to crop yields having been greatly damaged worldwide, leading to an worry that we will see an increase in famines and food shortages.

Communities worldwide have been witnessing the effects of rising sea levels, record high tides, an increase in seawater temperatures and the melting of the polar ice caps. Venice recently experienced the highest tides it has witnessed in fifty years. However, often it is the poor communities in low-lying coastal areas who are hardest hit by these changes. Rising seawater temperatures have also provided for an increase in the strength and frequency of hurricanes and typhoons. The burning of fossil fuels has also led to the increasing acidification of our oceans from the absorption of carbon dioxide into seawater. Coral reefs, sea urchins, clams, oysters, and other calcifying organisms in particular are dying out. It has been predicted that 90% of the world's coral reefs could die out by 2050 if changes are not made.

Climate-change induced natural disasters including rising sea levels will instigate mass migrations of internally displaced climate refugees. Already Florida is showing a net loss of population. Puerto Rico still suffers two years out, from the Hurricane damage from which the Trump administration failed to provide relief. As time goes by other Caribbean communities will be adversely impacted by the damage we have done to the stability of the climate. Our nation has a responsibility to provide relief for the damage our economic policies have unleashed on human populations around the world.

Net metering is when excess power generated by home power systems is fed back into the energy grid, often being purchased by the power company.

As Greens, we advocate policies to:

### **1. Implement a Green New Deal**

We reject the co-opted, watered down version of the Green New Deal used by Democrats as a political football as far too little, far too late. We insist that the original Green New Deal, as articulated by Green Party candidates (most notably in Howie Hawkins Gubernatorial bid and later with Jill Stein's Presidential run) address the issue unencumbered by the denial of climate

science. Stabilizing the climate will require bold policy leadership which aims to reduce the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere below 350 parts per million (ppm) which existed pre-1980. Just as we were able to restructure the national economy in a matter of months to meet the challenge of World War II, so must we proceed under a state of emergency to address catastrophic climate change with a similar sense of urgency. Georgia Greens embrace the outlines of such a program articulated in our national party's platform, to "revive the economy and make wars for oil obsolete": creating 20 million jobs transitioning to 100% renewables by 2030, the implementation of a Just Transition providing full income and benefits to displaced workers, providing "public, community and worker ownership" over our energy systems, building a "nationwide smart electricity grid that can pool and store power from a diversity of renewable sources", ending the subsidies of harmful technologies, phasing out legacy systems with a sense of urgency and leaving the carbon in the ground.

## **2. Close foreign bases, end US imperialism, bring the troops home**

The US has nearly 800 military bases in over 70 countries worldwide. A Green Congress will close these bases, downsize considerably the scope of the mission and the number of servicemembers in uniform. We will shift the mission of our military to address the real security threats faced by our nation and the global community of nations. As we make the solar transition, wars for oil will be even more absurd than they are now.

## **3. Rebuild the national grid**

An efficient power grid will require national coordination to knit together existing regional power grids. A diversity of large scale solar, solar thermal, wind and hydro, along with community and household based power generation systems can provide a stable power supply when tied together by a grid to distribute the power being generated to the power consumers in need.

## **4. Leave fossil fuels in the ground.**

Fossil fuels which are never mined never get burned, and contribute nothing to the carbon footprint of human activities. We advocate an end to fuel extraction from tar sands, offshore drilling, uranium mining, coal mining/mountaintop removal, hydraulic fracturing (fracking), etc. We support an immediate ban on all new permits for fracking in all forms, and the rapid phase-out of hydraulic fracturing operations previously permitted. We will hold the oil and gas industry financially responsible for all health, property, and environmental damages from fracking, including the resultant water contamination and earthquake damage. We will require

the fracking industry to disclose all chemicals used in fracking fluids for the health impacts upon people in areas where fracking is used as well as the environmental impacts, particularly the industry's impact on drinking water sources.

#### **5. Shut down the nuclear power industry**

Greens on the Public Service Commission and the state Assembly will collaborate to shut down the construction of all new nuclear power facilities in Georgia, working to ensure that the new reactors at Vogtle are never fueled and irradiated. Greens will quickly phase out reliance on, and proceed urgently to decommission the two nuclear reactors at Plant Hatch and the four at Plant Vogtle. We will hold the Southern Company responsible for the safe storage of spent nuclear material from these facilities, giving particular attention to the threat of flooding in the Altamaha and Savannah River basins, and the threat such flooding would pose to the secure storage of these irradiated materials.

#### **6. Invest in solar, wind, small scale hydropower and geo-thermal energy**

As Greens roll back tax-payer subsidies to the fossil fuel and nuclear industries, we will shift subsidies to encourage the purchase and installation of solar panels, wind turbines, and other renewable energy sources, particularly to household and community scale installations. We will require power companies to provide for net metering of energy generated by these sources.

#### **7. Address the carbon footprint of our transportation system**

Georgia Greens will shift transportation investments from those subsidizing the privately owned and operated automobile to those encouraging the expansion of the public transportation infrastructure sufficient to provide convenient and reliable access to everyone, and which effectively compete on the basis of economic cost and convenience. With changes to city planning standards, we can retool cities as walkable, bikeable, livable communities serving human needs through proximity rather than mobility.

#### **8. Revise building codes, invest in energy efficiency, optimize solar gain**

By revising building codes, we can encourage cost effective investments for new construction in energy efficiency improvements and with roofs which are pitched and oriented to optimize solar gain, and pre-wired for future roof top wind and solar installations, vastly improving the efficiency of such installations and providing significant savings when household based generating capacity is later installed.

## **9. Retrofit existing building stock for energy efficiency**

We will also use policy and financial incentives to encourage energy efficiency investments in our legacy homes, offices and industrial operations.

## **10. Sequester carbon**

Georgia Green elected officials will create a Carbon Sequestration Division for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, charged with oversight of programs for reforesting the state and to incentivize private landowners to restore ecosystems on privately owned lands. The Georgia Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Service will be funded to encourage the widespread use of regenerative agricultural practices.

## **11. Restructure agriculture to fulfill local nutritional needs, in sustainable ways.**

Georgia Green elected officials will create an office in the Department of Community Affairs to assist municipal and county governments with the creation of an inventory of public and private lands suitable for the development of community gardens; and the development of Community Supported Agriculture enterprises.

## **12. Enhance emergency preparedness**

Elected Greens will mobilize public and private resources to effectively respond to growing frequency and intensity of natural disasters we experience with growing climate instability.

## **13. Prepare to accommodate particularly internally displaced and Caribbean climate refugees**

Rising sea levels will displace coastal and island communities North of the fall line, and the Department of Community Affairs must be provided the staff, training and resources necessary to help both displaced communities and recipient communities plan for this disruption.

## **14. Support Georgia's Coastal communities to prepare for rising sea levels**

A Green caucus in the state assembly will lead the way to use the Department of Community Affairs to assist communities in Georgia's five coastal counties, especially, but also communities throughout South Georgia, and below the Fall line to begin planning now for the impacts of rising sea levels, further salt water intrusion into groundwater aquifers, to mitigate the adverse impacts expected in the agricultural sector from rising temperatures and the diminishing availability of groundwater for irrigation, and other impacts of the catastrophic climate crisis.