

workforce, and to remove barriers to full participation in community life for all Americans.

✔ Drug Policy

Governor Bush believes we have a responsibility to confront the problem of illegal drug abuse because drugs are destroying our neighborhoods and ruining lives. We should confront this scourge with a balanced policy of education, treatment, and law enforcement.

✔ Guns

Governor Bush believes the best gun control measure is to vigorously prosecute those who illegally sell guns, those who illegally carry guns, and those who illegally commit crimes with guns. Governor Bush's priority as President will be to keep guns away from criminals and juveniles. He will make federal gun prosecutions a top priority, reversing the 46% decline in federal gun prosecutions under the Clinton-Gore Administration. In addition, he will protect law-abiding citizens' constitutional Second Amendment rights while at the same time enacting reasonable, common-sense restrictions on the unsafe use of firearms.

✔ Immigration

Governor Bush believes that immigration is not a problem to be solved, but the sign of a successful nation. As Governor of a border state, he knows first-hand the benefits legal immigrants bring to America. While he is strongly opposed to illegal immigration, he believes more should be done to welcome legal immigrants. Therefore, he will establish a 6-month standard for processing immigration applications, encourage family reunification, and split the INS into two agencies: one focused on enforcement, and one focused on naturalization and immigration services.

✔ Home Ownership

Governor Bush believes homeownership is at the heart of the American Dream. However, the homeownership rate among low-income families and minorities lags behind the national average. Therefore, to increase opportunities for homeownership, Governor Bush will permit government-subsidized renters to aggregate up to a year's worth of rental vouchers to fund the down payment on a home. He will also establish a \$1 billion "American Dream Down Payment Fund" to provide matching grants to lenders to help an additional 650,000 low-income families finance the purchase of a first home. Finally, Governor Bush will provide \$1.7 billion in investor-based tax credits to encourage the rehabilitation or construction of new, affordable homes in distressed communities.

✔ Child Welfare/Family Policy

Governor Bush believes that our children are our greatest treasures and embody hope for the future. Everything must be done to ensure that every child grows up in a safe, stable and loving family... and that our child welfare system

actually advances this goal. He also believes that we can do more to promote responsible fatherhood.

✔ Crime

Governor Bush believes that the best way to protect the innocent is to fully enforce the law and to ensure swift and sure punishment for criminals. During his term in office as Governor of Texas, he has made combating juvenile crime a top priority. As a result of his tough policies, violent crime in Texas is down 20 percent and violent juvenile crime is down 44 percent. Governor Bush also advocated and signed legislation providing comprehensive juvenile justice reform, tougher sex offender laws, longer sentences for violent repeat offenders, and zero tolerance for drunk driving.

✔ Armies of Compassion

Governor Bush envisions a different role for government – a role based on the belief that government should turn first to faith-based organizations, charities, and community groups to help people in need. Resources should be devolved, not just to the states, but to the charities and neighborhood healers who need them most, and should be available on a competitive basis to all organizations – including religious groups – that produce results. As President, Governor George W. Bush will commit himself and the nation to mobilizing the armies of compassion – charities and churches, communities and corporations, ministers and mentors – to save and change lives, as he has done in Texas. This is the next bold step of welfare reform.

✔ Civil Justice Reform

Governor Bush believes that the litigation explosion clogging America's courts imposes significant and unnecessary costs on U.S. high-tech companies, small businesses, and consumers. Governor Bush believes that it is possible to deter and punish bad-faith frivolous litigation without compromising access to the courts for legitimate lawsuits. Although the Clinton-Gore Administration and the trial lawyers' lobby have consistently opposed reform efforts in Congress, as President, Governor Bush will fight to pass federal civil justice reform, just as he fought for and achieved civil justice reform in Texas.



For more information about these and other issues, please visit:
<http://www.georgewbush.com>



The Issues

Americans are yearning for a bold new leader with the courage of his convictions and the vision to guide our nation to greatness. While others believe that "perception is everything and issues are nothing," George W. Bush disagrees. He's laid out a compelling vision for America's future and proposed concrete, specific reforms for how to make our country a better place to live. These are the issues that affect our health and happiness, our life and liberty, our children's schools and our country's future. No one can say that in the race for President, voters won't have a clear choice. *A Vision for America*

✔ Education

Governor Bush will reform the nation's public schools, as he has in Texas, which is one of two states that have made the greatest recent progress in education. He will close the achievement gap, set high standards, promote character education, and ensure school safety. States will be offered freedom from federal regulation, but will be held accountable for results. Performance will be measured annually, and parents will be empowered with information and choices.

✔ Taxes

Governor Bush believes that roughly one-quarter of the surplus should be returned to the people who earned it through broad tax cuts – otherwise, Washington will spend it. His plan will promote economic growth and increase access to the middle class by cutting high marginal rates. It will also double the child credit, eliminate the death tax, reduce the marriage penalty, and expand Education

Savings Accounts and charitable deductions. The largest percentage cuts will go to the lowest income earners. As a result, 6 million families will no longer pay federal income tax.

✔ Social Security

Governor Bush believes Social Security is a defining American promise that must be kept. He will not change benefits in any way for current retirees or those near retirement. But to save Social Security for the next generation, he will lead a bipartisan effort to reform it by giving individuals the option of voluntarily investing a portion of their Social Security payroll taxes in personal retirement accounts. These accounts will earn higher rates of return and generate wealth that can be owned and passed on from parents to their children.

✔ Defense

Governor Bush believes that a strong, capable and modern military is the foundation of the peace we enjoy today and hope to extend for future generations. The military of the present must be better supported and respected. It must also be challenged and transformed to become the military of the future. The right choices must be made to renew the bond of trust between the President and the military, protect America with an effective national missile defense, and create a military capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st Century.

✔ Medicare

Governor Bush will reform Medicare so that seniors have access to prescription drugs and modern medicine and have more control over their own health care. Medicare is currently headed toward financial collapse, and its "one-size-fits-all" benefits package is outdated, covering neither prescription drugs nor other routine services such as annual physicals, vision tests and hearing aids. Governor Bush will reform Medicare by providing seniors with a prescription drug benefit as well as the ability to choose their own modern, comprehensive health plan. Governor Bush's plan will cover all prescription drug expenses for low-income seniors, the full cost of Medicare premiums for low-income seniors, at least part of the premium cost for all seniors, and the cost of catastrophic Medicare costs for all seniors.

✔ Agriculture

Governor Bush supports recent efforts to reverse decades of supply control management and unleash U.S. farmers to plant in response to market demand, not government programs. But as the farm sector transitions toward market-driven production, Governor Bush believes the government should help farmers adapt to the challenges of the global marketplace as well as work to maintain competitive markets here in the United States. This means providing farmers and ranchers with a strong safety net and the means to manage economic downturns, such as crop

insurance reform, tax-deferred accounts, and elimination of the death tax. It also means opening markets overseas for U.S. farm products, eliminating agricultural export subsidies and tariffs worldwide.

✔ Technology and the New Economy

Governor Bush understands that hard-working entrepreneurs created the New Economy, not government. But, as he has shown in Texas, which leads the nation in high-tech job growth, government can create an environment in which entrepreneurs flourish: an environment that encourages innovation, rewards risk-taking, and promotes equal opportunity. Thus, as President, he will support the growth of the New Economy by cutting taxes, encouraging investment in R&D, curbing frivolous lawsuits, pursuing free trade and implementing sensible export controls. To ensure that all Americans share in the benefits of the New Economy, Governor Bush will reform education through high standards and accountability, accelerate e-government, and increase access to assistive technologies for Americans with disabilities.

✔ Health Care and the Uninsured

There are 43 million uninsured Americans – 4 million more than when the current Administration took office. Governor Bush will reverse this trend by making health insurance affordable for hard-working, low-income families. His plan will provide them with a \$2,000 refundable health credit so that they can choose health plans and physicians that fit their needs. He will also make it easier for small businesses, which employ 60 percent of the uninsured, to obtain lower cost insurance through associations. Finally, Governor Bush will remove federal regulations that restrict state flexibility in designing and implementing programs for the uninsured. Governor Bush will put the consumer, not the government, in charge of health care decisions.

✔ Environment and Natural Resources

Governor Bush is committed to a new era of environmental protection. The 30-year-old federal model of "mandate, regulate and litigate" needs to be modernized: it has yielded benefits in the past, but it encourages Americans to do the bare minimum to protect the environment and fails to reward innovation or results. Therefore, as President, Governor Bush will maintain a strong federal environmental role but will return significant authority to states and local communities. Under Governor Bush, the federal government will set high environmental standards and provide market-based incentives to develop new technologies and approaches so that Americans meet – and exceed – those standards. He will also ensure that the federal government, which is the country's largest polluter, complies with all environmental laws.

✔ Foreign Policy

Governor Bush believes that American foreign policy must be more than the management of crisis. It must have a

great and guiding goal: to turn this time of American influence into generations of democratic peace. This is accomplished by concentrating on enduring national interests and by resisting the temptation to withdraw from the world. As President, George W. Bush will pursue a distinctly American internationalism. He will set priorities and stick to them to avoid drift in foreign policy.

✔ Government Reform

Governor Bush believes a strong leader focuses on solving problems, not settling scores. As President, he will restore honor and dignity to the White House, and set a new tone of respect and bipartisanship in Washington. To restore confidence in government, he will: reform the budget process to encourage cooperation and prevent government shutdowns, attack pork-barrel spending, and return civility to the nomination process.

✔ International Trade

Governor Bush believes the United States will continue to be prosperous and competitive in the global marketplace if we embrace free trade. As President, he will work with Congress to restore Presidential trade negotiating authority and reassert American leadership on trade internationally. His priorities will include expanding free trade within our hemisphere, negotiating other regional and bilateral market-opening agreements, supporting the entry of China and Taiwan into the World Trade Organization, launching an ambitious new round of global trade talks, and enforcing American laws against unfair trade practices. Governor Bush believes that free trade is "a forward strategy for freedom," and that as American goods and services enter foreign countries, so, too, do American values.

✔ Government Modernization

Governor Bush has offered a comprehensive reform agenda that will ensure that every child is educated; lift the income tax burden on Americans; save and strengthen social security; and revitalize our military. To make this vision a reality will require a departure from the old ways of government. The success of each initiative will depend on reforms within government itself. Governor Bush will put citizens back in charge of government by making government more citizen-centered and accountable.

✔ Disabilities

Governor Bush believes that all Americans should have the opportunity to learn and develop skills, engage in productive work, choose where to live, and participate in community life. Although progress has been made over the last two decades – most prominently with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990 – Governor Bush believes that much more needs to be done. Governor Bush has proposed a "New Freedom Initiative," \$1.025 billion over 5 years to expand access to assistive technology, to further integrate Americans with disabilities into the