

ACORN People's Platform

Preamble

We stand for a People's Platform, as old as our country, and as young as our dreams. We come before our nation, not to petition with hat in hand, but to rise as one people and demand.

We have waited and watched. We have hoped and helped. We have sweated and suffered.

We have often believed. We have frequently followed.

But we have nothing to show for the work of our hands, the tax of our labor. Our patience has been abused; our experience misused. Our silence has been seen as support. Our struggle has been ignored.

Enough is enough. We will wait no longer for the crumbs at America's door. We will not be meek, but mighty. We will not starve on past promises, but feast on future dreams.

We are an uncommon common people. We are the majority, forged from all minorities. We are the masses of many, not the forces of few. We will continue our fight until the American way is just one way, until we have shared the wealth, until we have won our freedom.

This is not a simple vision, but a detailed plan.

Our plan is to build an American reality from the American rhetoric, to deliver a piece of the present and the fruits of the future to every man, to every woman, to every family.

We demand our birthright: the chance to be rich, the right to be free.

Our riches shall be the blooming of our communities, the bounty of a sure livelihood, the beauty of homes for our families with sickness driven from the door, the benefit of our taxes, not their burden; and the best of our energy, land and natural resources for all people.

Our freedom shall be based on the equality of the many, not the income of the few. Our freedom is the force of democracy, not the farce of federal fat and personal profit. In our freedom, only the people shall rule.

Corporations shall have their role: producing jobs, providing products, paying taxes. No more. No less. They shall obey our wishes, respond to our needs, serve our communities. Our country shall be the citizens' wealth and our wealth shall build our country.

Government shall have its role: public servant to our good, fast follower to our sure steps. No more. No less. Our government shall shout with a public voice, and no longer jump to a private whisper. In our government, the common concerns shall be the collective cause.

We present a people's platform, not a politician's promise.

We demand the changes outlined in our platform and plan. We will work to win. We will have our birthright. We will live in richness and freedom. We will live in one country as one people.

We will dream of more, but we will not settle for less.

Energy

I. Put people before profits at the utilities

- Restructure utility rates by:
 - a. Ending all discount rates for large commercial and industrial users.
 - b. Introducing Lifeline utility rates for small users.
- Ban all utility shut-offs during the winter months and require all utilities to offer partial-payment arrangements in lieu of shut-offs.
- Reform the utility "rate base" concept by:
 - a. Removing the cost of new plants from the rate base until these plants are fully operational.
 - b. Removing political and charitable contributions from the rate base.

- c. Forcing the utilities to absorb the cost of accidents rather than passing them on to their customers.
- d. Ending the manipulation of income tax laws which allow the utilities to pass along the cost of taxes they don't actually pay.
- e. Prohibiting utility companies from automatically passing along increased fuel costs without public review.
- f. Prohibiting utilities from including the costs of advertising and the costs of presenting their rate cases in the rate base.
- Promote the formation of new publicly-owned utilities as a "yardstick" and control on investor-owned utilities.