

DEMOCRATIC COST OF LIVING AGENDA:

A LOW-COST FRAMEWORK FOR HELPING FAMILIES BUILD ABUNDANT HOMES, CARE, AND ENERGY

Why a Cost of Living Agenda?

- ▶ **Cost of living** is voters' top concern
- ▶ Highest costs are in **supply-constrained sectors**: housing, care, energy
- ▶ **Scarcity** is a major factor driving unaffordability and lack of climate progress
- ▶ **Republicans' only solution** is shifting costs to consumers with privatization and higher import taxes
- ▶ **Existing Democratic solutions are insufficient**: Corporate greed is a small factor; subsidizing demand pushes prices even higher
- ▶ Opportunity to define Democrats' next agenda

READ THE FULL AGENDA



KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Democratic supply solutions are **proven successes**
2. **Competition** will increase choice and **reduce prices**
3. Increasing supply promotes **equity and fairness**
4. **Avoid raising taxes** with zero-and low-cost solutions
5. Advance popular policies to **win voters over**

WHAT CAN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DO?

HOUSING

Reform zoning to deliver housing where people want to live

- Technical assistance and grants to support communities with zoning reform
- Fiscal carrots and sticks on local zoning — CDBG, transit grants

Embrace innovative housing types to lower construction costs

- Create streamlined national standards for mass timber

- Create model code for smaller, fabricated elevators
- Re-legalize single-room occupancy (SRO) buildings in states with high homelessness
- Eliminate the chassis rule for small manufactured homes

Reduce cost of construction inputs

- Remove tariffs on imports from allies of key construction inputs
- Ensure that immigration enforcement does not undermine homebuilding

ENERGY

Accelerate green energy construction and transmission

- Reform NEPA for green energy construction
- Allow FERC to designate more high-capacity electricity transmission lines, particularly along interstate highways
- Repeal the Jones Act to lower costs for goods transportation and offshore energy construction
- Accelerate nuclear energy licensing
- Adopt international standards for advanced refrigerants in heat pumps

Unlock production and imports of key green energy inputs and enable more competition in transportation

- Support green steel/cement through the Industrial Demonstrations Program to compete with Europe
- Negotiate an Environmental Goods Trade Agreement to reduce tariffs on green goods
- Restore the Bureau of Mines to consolidate permitting and fund innovation
- Allow foreign airlines to serve United States domestic routes, increasing competition

WHAT CAN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DO? (CONTINUED)

HEALTHCARE

Increase the number of providers to expand access and lower cost

- Make 2000 more residency positions eligible for education payments under Medicare annually
- Permanently cover testing and vaccines for COVID and flu in pharmacies under Medicare

- Allow nurse practitioners and physician assistants to treat federal employees in workers' comp cases

Promote healthcare competition

- Designate greater funding for antitrust enforcement on hospital systems
- Categorize sunscreen as a cosmetic to allow imports from places with high standards

CHILDREN

Provide a better safety net for kids

- Expand the Child Tax Credit by \$300 per month for children under 6
- Adopt Medicare for Kids
- Fund universal free school lunches

- Prevent baby formula shortages by updating standards and allowing more imports of safe formula

Childcare

- Remove the Trump moratorium on growing the au pair program and increase the time limit to four years

INCLUSIVE FUTURE

Embrace promising technologies

- Expand satellite broadband for underserved areas by updating FCC rules & including satellite in BEAD program
- Facilitate remote health monitoring with data protocol guidelines to promote interoperability

- Accelerate disability assistive technologies by enabling greater experimentation at early stages
- Encourage vehicle innovation by making rules neutral between human-driven and autonomous vehicles
- Allow Medicare to cover weight loss drugs like GLP-1s (Ozempic, Wegovy)

WHAT CAN STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DO?

HOUSING

Reform zoning

- Allow mixed use zoning, especially in commercial areas
- Legalize duplexes and triplexes on all residential lots
- Streamline permitting for accessory dwelling units
- Reduce minimum lot sizes to 1400 square feet
- Eliminate parking minimums
- Embrace Five-Over-Ones, removing restrictions
- Allow single-stair point access block apartments up to six stories

Embrace innovative housing types to lower construction costs

- Adopt the IBC 2021 standards for mass timber

ENERGY

Accelerate green energy construction and transmission

- Reform state-level "baby NEPAs" for green construction

Reduce transportation costs

- Right-size transit designs to improve efficiency
- Add bike lanes
- Facilitate work-from-home by updating tax treatment and reciprocal license recognition

HEALTHCARE

Increase the number of providers to expand access and lower cost

- Allow NPs and Physician Assistants to have "full practice" up to their level of education and training
- Allow experienced international doctors to practice under provisional licenses
- Facilitate telemedicine with special licenses or simple registration processes

Promote healthcare competition

- Repeal Certificate-of-Need laws

CHILDREN

- Consider small relaxations of child-teacher ratios
- Ensure zoning does not inhibit creating in-home or center-based child care
- Avoid excessive occupational licensing requirements
- Fund universal free school lunches