Republican Platform:

The burden of our country's extended military involvement in the Middle East has taken a toll on our service personnel. Suicides among our military — active duty troops, reservists, National Guardsmen, and veterans — are at shocking levels, while post-service medical conditions, including addiction and mental illness, require more and more assistance.

More than ever, our government must work with the private sector to advance opportunities and provide assistance to those wounded in spirit as well as in body, whether through experimental efforts like the PAWS (Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemen) program for service dogs or through the faith-based institutions that have traditionally been providers of comfort and healing.

We support the rights of conscience of military chaplains of all faiths to practice their faith free from political interference. We reject attempts by the current Administration to silence them, particularly Christians and Christian chaplains.

We support an increase in the size of the Chaplain Corps. A Republican commander-in-chief will protect the religious freedom of all military members, especially chaplains, and will not tolerate attempts to ban Bibles or religious symbols from military facilities. A Republican commander-in-chief in the Middle East has taken a toll on religious liberties of military personnel under both the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the current National Defense Authorization Act.

Our country's all-volunteer force has been a success. We oppose the reinstatement of the draft, except in dire circumstances like world war, whether directly or through compulsory national service. We support the all-volunteer force and oppose unnecessary policy changes, including compulsory national service and Selective Service registration of women for a possible future draft. We reiterate our support for both the advancement of women in the military and their exemption from direct ground combat units and infantry battalions. We affirm the

Democratic Platform:

Veterans and Service Members

Our country has a sacred, moral responsibility to keep faith with all our veterans and wounded warriors. We must take care of those who have put their lives on the line to defend us. That is why we will push for more educational benefits and improved training, end chronic homelessness and combat suicide, and protect and preserve the post-9/11 GI Bill for future generations. We will also ensure that reservists and Guard members are treated fairly when it comes to employment, health, education benefits, deployment, and reintegration.

We are outraged by the systemic problems plaguing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). We will fight for every veteran to have timely access to high-quality health care and timely processing of claims and appeals. We must also look for ways to make certain the VA provides veteran-centric care, such as providing women with full and equal treatment, including reproductive health services; expanding mental health programs; continuing efforts to identify and treat invisible, latent, and toxic wounds of war; treating post-traumatic stress; and expanding the post-9/11 veteran’s caregiver program to include all veterans.

We reject attempts by Republicans to sell out the needs of veterans by privatizing the VA. We believe that the VA must be fully resourced so that every veteran gets the care that he or she has earned and deserves, including those suffering from sexual assault, mental illness and other injuries or ailments.