

Presidential Candidate Chart

The work of NETWORK is rooted in the Catholic social justice tradition—encompassing Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching, and the lived experience of Jesus and followers of the Gospel call for justice.

This chart is a tool for placing the presidential candidates' positions within this framework.

Preference for Those Who Are Vulnerable

Caring especially for those who are vulnerable is essential to the common good. A healthy community can be achieved only if its members give special attention to those on the margins of society. The moral measure of our society is how we treat our most vulnerable people; this test is fundamental to all policy evaluation.

Solidarity and Stewardship

Solidarity requires that individual and social decisions be made with loving concern for the common good and the dignity of each person. Sustainability and distributive justice must be central to how we organize our economy and development. Pollution and depletion of resources beyond regeneration or repair harm future generations and God's Creation.

Human Dignity & Life

A consistent ethic of life requires us to address war, abortion and capital punishment; to challenge affronts to dignity such as inhumane living conditions, mistreatment of workers, and unfair immigration policies; and to rectify material conditions that undermine the dignity and humanity of all people, especially those who are most vulnerable.

	Senator John McCain	Senator Barack Obama
ECOLOGY	Coauthored the Climate Stewardship Act of 2007 to reduce carbon emission levels to 60% below 1990 levels by 2050. Supported raising fuel economy standards to 35 mpg but opposed 40 mpg. Voted against standards requiring that 10% of electricity come from renewable sources by 2020.	Cosponsored Senator McCain's Climate Stewardship Act but supports stiffer 80% reduction of carbon emissions. Coauthored Fuel Economy Reform Act of 2007, calling for a 40 mpg fuel standard. Supports requiring that 25% of energy come from renewable sources by 2025.
EDUCATION	Believes school competition and parent choice are the best way to guarantee quality education for all. Supports vouchers allowing parents to choose their children's school and tax-deferred savings accounts for higher education.	Supports increasing Head Start funding, quadrupling Early Start to include a quarter of a million at-risk children, increasing teacher pay, charter schools, and a \$4,000 annual tax credit for higher education.
FEDERAL BUDGET PRIORITIES	Believes 3/5 majority vote in Congress should be required to raise taxes. Will veto pork-barrel spending & seek line-item veto. Supports one-year spending freeze to evaluate federal programs outside of essential military & veterans programs.	Supports balancing the budget; Pay As You Go rules; investing more in pre-K through higher education, foreign aid, healthcare, social services and the military; and reducing corporate tax breaks.
HEALTHCARE	Believes cost containment is the best way to expand access to healthcare. Supports tax credits encouraging individual-rather than employer-purchased insurance. Will help states create insurance pools for those rejected by insurance companies.	Believes ensuring quality coverage for all is the most pressing healthcare issue. Will expand coverage with tax credits for low- and middle-income households and market reforms guaranteeing insurability.
HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS	Supports federally backed mortgages for subprime borrowers in danger of foreclosure. Supported bills providing at-risk veterans with housing and support services. Voted against a fund expanding affordable housing in 2000, but has taken no position on current legislation doing the same.	Cosponsored legislation to expand affordable housing and to allow those facing foreclosure to refinance with federally guaranteed mortgages. Authored legislation pairing housing for at-risk veterans with support services. Will expand supportive housing to prevent homelessness.

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Presidential Candidate Chart, *continued*

	Senator John McCain	Senator Barack Obama
HUNGER	Will end policies like ethanol subsidies, tariff barriers and sugar quotas that contribute to higher food costs.	Will increase food stamp and nutrition program funding, and improve food access in urban and rural areas by supporting local food systems, funding farm-to-school projects, and allowing schools to give priority to local producers.
IMMIGRATION & REFUGEES	Supports a path to citizenship that includes learning English and paying fines, and a guest worker program that issues visas when jobs cannot be filled by U.S. citizens.	Supports a path to citizenship that includes learning English and paying fines, and provides legal protections against exploitation. Would simplify immigration system to reunite families and meet demand for workers. Will increase assistance for Iraqi refugees by \$2 billion, and expedite the process allowing their passage to the U.S.
LIVING WAGE	Holds no stated position on a living wage. Voted for the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007, but has historically voted against minimum wage increases, arguing that they can hurt small businesses.	Supports raising the minimum wage and indexing it to inflation. Believes this will help workers earn enough to raise their families and pay for basic needs.
PEACE BUILDING & DEVELOPMENT	Committed to continuing AIDS relief, but not to fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals. Supports developing a missile defense system and expanding the military.	Will double foreign aid and expand diplomacy. Introduced the Global Poverty Act, which makes cutting extreme poverty in half by 2015 an official U.S. policy goal. Opposes missile defense spending.
PROTECTING LIFE	Will withdraw troops when Iraqi forces can safeguard their country. Supports an abortion ban with exceptions for rape, incest and risk to the mother's life. In 2005, voted against expanding health services and education to reduce unintended pregnancy. Supports the death penalty.	Pledges to withdraw all combat brigades from Iraq within 16 months. Opposes an abortion ban. In 2005, voted to expand health services and education to reduce unintended pregnancy. Wants to guarantee paid maternity leave. Supports the death penalty.
SOCIAL SAFETY NET	Supports Social Security reform that reduces guaranteed benefits and supplements them with private accounts. Supports investing some of the Unemployment Insurance tax into private accounts, providing traditional Unemployment Insurance only if accounts are exhausted before 26 weeks.	Supports Social Security reform extending payroll taxes to wages above \$97,500 to protect future benefits. Cosponsored legislation extending Unemployment Insurance to jobs lost for family reasons, and for those who can only seek part time employment.
TAXATION	Supports repealing the Alternative Minimum Tax; doubling the exemption for dependents; extending tax cuts for earners making more than \$250,000; keeping the capital gains tax at 15%; cutting the corporate tax from 35% to 25%; and a tax exemption for estates up to \$10 million.	Supports creating a \$1,000/family tax credit to offset payroll taxes; increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit; creating a mortgage credit for those who do not itemize deductions; increasing the capital gains tax; and eliminating corporate tax havens. Opposes extending tax cuts for earners making over \$250,000.
TRADE & INVESTMENT	Supports reducing U.S. agricultural subsidies and aggressively promoting trade barrier reductions to level the global playing field. Supports the Oman, Colombia, South Korea, Peru, Central, and North American Free Trade Agreements.	Supports agricultural subsidies and opening foreign markets to U.S. products. Will not sign trade agreements unless they have labor and environmental protections. Supported the Peru, but opposed the Colombian, South Korean, and Central American Free Trade Agreements. Supports amending NAFTA.

Sources: Candidate positions, proposals, and voting records based on contact with presidential campaigns and information from campaign websites, candidate speeches, NETWORK voting records and the Library of Congress. Go to www.networklobby.org for additional information on candidate positions, speeches, votes, and a list of other references.



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