



PRESIDENTIAL Candidate Questionnaire

For the past 40 years, the American Farm Bureau Federation has asked every presidential candidate to provide responses to issues likely to impact and affect farmers and ranchers and rural communities in the next four years. Both President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden have provided their answers. Their responses have been unedited and are shared with you in the same style that they were provided to the American Farm Bureau Federation. The responses are being shared with you so you can read directly from the candidates on their policy positions and direction for our country. *Information is courtesy of the American Farm Bureau Federation.*



Food System Resiliency

The COVID-19 pandemic awakened many Americans to the realization that stocked grocery shelves should not be taken for granted. Farmers and ranchers experienced enormous losses as the food supply chain adapted to changing demands and pandemic impacts. Agriculture's role in our national security became much clearer to many.

As president, what investments and/or policies would you support to ensure the resiliency of our food system?



Our country was invaded by an invisible enemy in a way that none of us could have imagined when President Trump met with you at your annual convention in Austin back in January. From the very beginning of the pandemic the Trump/Pence Administration worked to ensure that we protected our nation's food supply, the critical infrastructure, and the work-

ers who support the entire supply chain.

Our ag and food value chain is the envy of the world, but faced significant challenges during the COVID outbreak as retail and food service delivery mechanisms were upended almost overnight through the rapid closures our country faced in March.

On March 19, 2020, the Trump/Pence Administration released its list of designated critical infrastructure that exempted the entire food and agriculture production system from any quarantine or stay at home requirements. This exemption list became the guide that was used by every Governor in every state to determine closures. Without this guidance, farmers most likely would not have gotten the products they needed for spring planting and each state's mandatory closure requirement would have been different for the farmer and all of their suppliers.

On April 17th, the Trump/Pence Administration announced the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program which committed up to \$16 billion in direct payments to farmers and ranchers impacted by market disruptions and committed an additional \$3 billion for the Farmers to Families Food Box Program. The Farmers to Family Food

Box Program has been an innovative program that acquired perishable fruits and vegetables, dairy, and meat products that had been impacted by school, restaurant and other food service customers, and distributed those nutritious products to Americans most in need. The Administration has distributed over 50 million of these boxes. The program has accomplished the goals of moving excess product, stabilizing the market, and getting food to those most in need.

On April 28th, the Trump/Pence administration issued an executive order that deployed the Defense Production Act for our meat packing industry. This act made it clear meatpacking plants that met OSHA and CDC guidelines should remain open. It was critical that we kept meat in our grocery stores during this national crisis, and it was critical for our farmers and ranchers that these facilities remained opened to process animals that were ready for market. There were many stories in the spring about worst case scenarios in the meat and poultry sectors, and while these were trying times, through strong and clear actions we were able to quickly work to stabilize the meat production sector.

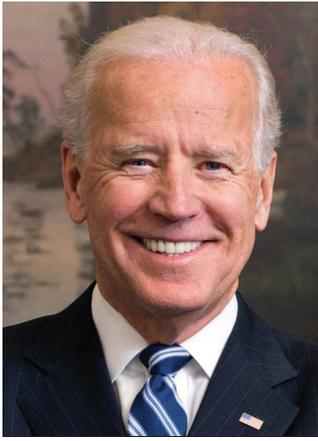
Throughout this crisis, the Trump/Pence Administration has engaged heavily with leaders in the industry at every point in the supply chain. The Vice President's task force has in addition to health experts, also included the Secretary of Agriculture, as food/agriculture issues remain one of the critical aspects of any national crisis response.

Another critical aspect of our food supply system is our nation's public feeding programs. Throughout the pandemic the Trump/Pence Administration has worked to ensure maximum flexibility to states as they administer these programs, from the School Meal program, to SNAP benefits, we have ensured that the men, women, and children most vulnerable to the impacts of this pandemic both from health and economic impact continue to have access

Food System Resiliency *continued...*

to the food they need.

Thankfully, throughout this crisis, we never had a “food supply” problem, we had a highly efficient, safe, and affordable ag and food value chain that was and remains the envy of the world. The strength of that value chain was bent in ways it never had before, but it never broke, and it has been the privilege of the Trump/Pence Administration to leverage government resources and coordination capabilities to ensure our private sector was able to continue meeting the food needs of all Americans



In this campaign, I've proposed a series of plans known as our “Build Back Better” agenda. The pandemic has laid bare some unacceptable truths about how our economy does not welcome all Americans as full participants. This is no time to just build back to the way things were before, with the old economy's structural weaknesses and inequalities still in place. This is the mo-

ment to imagine and build a new American economy for our families and the next generation.

The Biden-Harris [Plan](#) to build modern, sustainable infrastructure and an equitable clean energy future [plans](#) features an investment in sustainable agriculture and conservation. Our family farmers and ranchers were already fighting an uphill battle because of Trump's irresponsible trade policies and consistent siding with oil lobbyists over American growers, but COVID-19 has placed new pressures on that sector and the rural economies it sustains. We will bring back America's advantage in agriculture, create jobs, and build a bright future for rural communities by investing in the next generation of agriculture and conservation; providing opportunities to new farmers and ranchers, including returning veterans and minorities, to enter the economy; and making it easier to pass farms and ranches onto the next generation. We will also help farmers leverage new technologies, techniques, and equipment to increase productivity and profit – including by providing low-cost finance for the transition to new equipment and methods, funding research and development in precision agriculture and new crops, and establishing a new voluntary carbon farming market

that rewards farmers for the carbon they sequester on their land and the greenhouse gas emission reductions, including from methane, that they secure. These efforts to partner with farmers will help them tap into new income streams as they tackle the challenge of sequestering carbon, reducing emissions, and continue their track record as global leaders in agricultural innovation. Instead of making things harder for farmers, we will stand with them as they fight against the threats of climate change, droughts, flooding and extreme weather, while partnering with them to make American agriculture the first in the world to achieve net-zero emissions.

We also will invest in diverse farmers to make our agriculture sector stronger and more resilient. American agriculture is strong in part because of our incredible range of farm types and sizes — and we've got to make sure that anyone who wants to serve our country as a farmer can get assistance from USDA. A Biden-Harris Administration will ensure the U.S. Department of Agriculture ends historical discrimination against Black farmers in federal farm programs and that all socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers have access to programs that support their family farms.

And we will strengthen antitrust enforcement, including in the farm and food production industry. Americans are hurt by increasing market concentration in the food industry. The Biden-Harris Administration will protect small and medium-sized farmers and producers by strengthening enforcement of the Sherman and Clayton Antitrust Acts and the Packers and Stockyards Act.

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Farm Policy Programs

Reliable food supplies and stable prices are critical for the United States' long-term prosperity and economic well-being. Programs in the farm bill, set to be renewed in 2023, provide key safety net and risk management tools for farmers, as well as critical tools to help farmers implement resource-conserving practices on the farm as well as trade promotion programs that help us build new markets abroad. Sustained, effective and predictable policy through the farm bill is necessary to address the threats that farmers have faced historically and new threats we now face to provide a consistent food supply. This includes defending and strengthening crop insurance for risk management that is affordable and flexible for all producers.

As president, how would you be a proponent for enhancing farm policy programs to bring certainty to farm and ranch families through crop insurance, improved risk management programs and support for beginning farmers and ranchers, while also bringing much-needed funding to trade development and agricultural research?



President Trump supported and signed the 2018 Farm Bill, and the Trump/Pence Administration worked expeditiously to implement the critical legislation.

The Trump Administration has implemented several new programs in the 2018 Farm Bill which have helped support our farmers during these uncertain times. This includes the dairy margin coverage program which

has helped dairies across our country, especially in leading dairy states like Minnesota, Wisconsin, Idaho, California, New York, and Pennsylvania withstand difficult market conditions. The Administration has worked on regulations that will support the burgeoning hemp industry, establishing rules that will lay the foundation for this to become another crop rotation option for farmers across the country. The Administration has also implemented provisions that will ensure the health of our nation's livestock sector, even as we have seen disease threats like the African Swine Fever decimate China's pork industry. Through new Farm Bill tools, we are working to ensure we keep these diseases out of the United States and developing vaccines and tools that can protect our domestic industry should we ever en-

counter such threats.

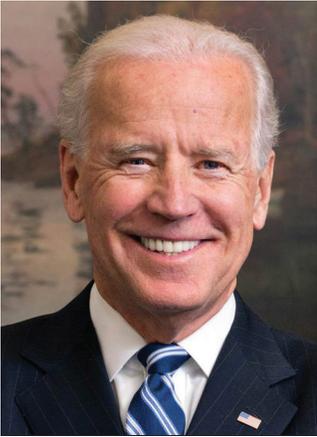
The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for Farm Bill programs that will help farmers prepare for the threats of tomorrow while maximizing productivity today.

President Trump believes that a new farm bill must be generous to our farmers and must do a better job of sustaining them through these tough times. The new farm bill cannot impose new regulatory or climate requirements on already struggling farmers. The smallest farmers will be the hardest hurt by new and unfunded mandates in the new farm bill.

Future Farm Bills must focus on building on the key pillars of our domestic farm policy including a strong crop insurance system, voluntary conservation programs, and increased agricultural research. Our farmers are the most innovative and productive in the world, and our farm policy must continue to unleash this great potential.

In addition to the Farm safety net, the Trump Administration has worked to ensure our farmers have had adequate protection from the Market Facilitation Program responding to unjustified trade retaliation; to Disaster programs that have come to aid our farmers that faced drought, fire, flood and snow across the Southeast, the midwest, and the West; to the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program. Our farmers have faced much adversity, but as the heroic patriots they are, they have continued to get the job done, and the Trump/Pence Administration has boldly stood with them in that work.

Farm Policy Programs *continued...*



Crop insurance and risk management tools are incredibly important to farmers, especially in light of the most recent wind storm in Iowa, the fires out west, the drought in the Midwest, and Hurricane Laura in Texas and Louisiana. A Biden-Harris Administration will understand the important role crop insurance plays and will make sure the safety net is there for those who need it.

We also will strengthen our agricultural sector by pursuing a trade policy that works for American farmers. [More than 20%](#) of all crops grown and products raised in the United States are exported, [supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs](#) and helping to stabilize farm income. But America's farmers and rural communities have paid a heavy price for President Trump's tariffs. While Trump is pursuing a damaging and erratic trade war without any real strategy, we will stand up to China by working with our allies to negotiate from the strongest possible position. More information on what our administration's trade policy will be can be found in the next section on international trade.

A Biden-Harris Administration will support beginning farmers. America tries to make it easy to start a business,

but unless you inherit the land, it's much more difficult to start a farm. We will expand the Obama-Biden Administration's [microloan program for new and beginning farmers](#), doubling the maximum loan amount to \$100,000. And, it will increase funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [farm ownership and operating loans](#) that typically serve beginning farmers who grew up on a family farm but need low-cost capital to add to their family's operation to support another household.

We will reinvest in land grant universities' agricultural research so the public, not private companies, owns patents to agricultural advances. We'll reinvest in agricultural research by bolstering funding for the [Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program](#) and the [National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#). Our farmers need new technologies to compete in world markets while protecting our soil and water. These new technologies – and the next new seeds – should be developed and owned by the American people, not private companies who can use patents to expand profits.

And, we will strengthen antitrust enforcement. From the inputs they depend on – such as seeds – to the markets where they sell their products, American farmers and ranchers are being hurt by increasing market concentration. The Biden-Harris Administration will protect small and medium-sized farmers and producers by strengthening enforcement of the Sherman and Clayton Antitrust Acts and the Packers and Stockyards Act.

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International Trade

The COVID-19 pandemic awakened many Americans to the realization that stocked grocery shelves should not be taken for granted. Farmers and ranchers experienced enormous losses as the food supply chain adapted to changing demands and pandemic impacts. Agriculture's role in our national security became much clearer to many.

As president, what investments and/or policies would you support to ensure the resiliency of our food system?



A major focus of the Trump Administration has been to renegotiate trade deals that were weak and provided inadequate market access and import protection to US farmers and ranchers. Previous Administrations negotiated trade deals that put our farmers and ranchers in a negative position to those that we compete with in foreign markets. To address this, the Trump/Pence Administration negoti-

ated the following significant multilateral trade agreements:

- Korea
- Japan
- USMCA
- China phase 1

• No one knows better than our nation's farmers and ranchers that for decades, China has stolen our technology, restricted US foreign investment, manipulated their currencies and kept US farm products out of their market.

• China has begun making purchases under the phase 1 commitment, and in a second Trump Administration term China will have to come back to the table for more access to American farmers.

In each of these agreements the Trump/Pence Administration has negotiated better deals for farmers and ranchers than what was in place previously.

The strategy of negotiating key trade deals on a multilateral basis has been a primary focus of the Trump/Pence Administration. While the Obama/Biden Administration negotiated weak trade deals, focusing on multilateral negotiations, the Trump/Pence team negotiated successful trade agreements with the above.

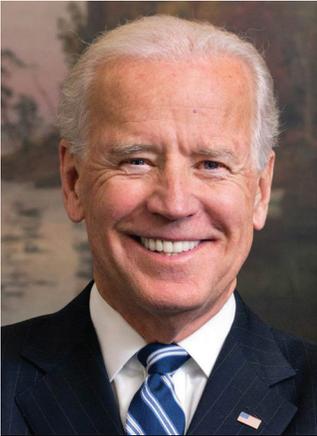
In addition to the new agreements President Trump has negotiated, we have also stood by are farmers when they were targeted by unjust trade retaliation. Other countries, China in particular, thought they could force us to accept more bad trade deals by targeting our farmers. We have taken some of the revenue we received in tariffs and we have provided \$28 billion in direct support to those farms and commodities that have been unjustly targeted.

For too many years, American trade policy has allowed other countries to take advantage of us. Joe Biden doesn't have a plan on trade, he will revert to the Obama-Biden years of letting China take advantage of us.

President Trump is very grateful to the American farmer for their patriotism that enabled him to stand up to the Chinese and be the first president to force them to change their practices that have resulted in the loss of millions of jobs in the U.S. President Trump will never ask the American farmer to bear the cost of our important work to make China play by the same rules as the rest of the world.

We know our farmers want markets, they want to grow and produce things to sell here in America and to the world, we also know that they want fair and reciprocal trade deals. The farmers have stood with us as we have taken on these unfair trade practices, and we have stood with them. When President Trump wins a second term, other countries already know he means what he says on trade, and we will continue to see more favorable agreements reached in a second term. There will be more opportunities with China if they decide to take more steps to play by the rules, we will get a bigger deal done with Japan, we are in talks with other major Asian countries. President Trump is also eager to finalize a new U.S.-U.K. Trade agreement that includes significant agriculture access, and hopes that can pave the way for progress with the EU as well, one of the most unfair markets to many of our America farmers.

International Trade *continued...*



We will develop a comprehensive strategy to aggressively enforce our laws in an effective way whenever it is needed. Critically, we will also look at what new approaches and tools are needed to combat unfair trade practices jeopardizing production and jobs here and to gain access for our products in other markets. We must address the continuous efforts to evade and circum-

vent our trade laws and undermine the effectiveness of our trade cases. The issues of global overcapacity, foreign state-owned enterprises, and other problems undermine our interests and can't continue. Workers deserve to know that their government will stand by their side and stand up for their rights so they don't have to fight unfair trade on their own or see their jobs offshored and production outsourced. Foreign cheating will not be allowed in our administration.



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Tax Policy

Agriculture operates in a world of uncertainty. From unpredictable national situations to commodity and product market instabilities to fluctuating input prices, from natural disasters and damaging weather events to insect or disease outbreaks, running a farm or ranch business is challenging under the best of circumstances. The vast majority of farm and ranch operations are pass-through businesses and many of the provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that benefit them are temporary. Farmers and ranchers need a tax code that provides certainty and recognizes their unique financial challenges.

As president, what provisions would you support to help farmers and ranchers remain on the land and producing food, fuel and fiber?



One of the most important achievements of my first term was to gain passage of the most significant tax reform in our nation's history. Both corporate and individual rates were reduced, capital gains tax were significantly reduced, and the death tax burden, which directly hits our family farms across the US, were significantly reduced by raising the exemption level and addressing the

stepped-up basis.

These tax cuts have unleashed the strength of our farm economy, allowing farmers to have certainty about future generations, and allowing farmers to invest more of their revenue back into their businesses and communities.

We already know that a Biden Administration will work to raise taxes from day 1. To make matters worse, because of the capital intensive nature of farming, these tax increases could have an even greater negative impact on farmers and ranchers if they are unable to make important investments in land, equipment, and inputs necessary to generate such abundant results.

Is there any farmer in America that does not believe that Joe Biden will want to dramatically raise estate taxes? President Trump does not believe that death should be a taxable event simply because someone built a successful business.



We are committed to a set of fiscal policies that encourage American prosperity and benefit American businesses across the economy--not just the well-connected few. We will work with Congress to implement a fair, permanent tax code that provides certainty to plan for the future, while abolishing incentives that reward companies for offshoring production or avoiding taxes by using tax

havens. In addition, we will raise the corporate tax rate to 28 percent, rolling back the Republicans massive \$1.3 trillion giveaway to corporations and putting small businesses on equal footing with large corporations. This additional revenue will be used to make investments in households and businesses around the country, including those that will help farmers and ranchers boost their productivity and better compete in world agricultural markets.

Energy

Agriculture is a growing provider of renewable energy—contributing to America’s energy independence and revitalizing rural economies. Our national energy policy should include taking maximum advantage of all available domestic resources to achieve energy independence and a stable energy market, including support for tax provisions that incentivize the production of biofuels and renewable energy.

As president, how would you support federal policies that encourage the domestic production and use of biofuels and renewable energy?



One of the proudest achievements of the first term is that we have gained energy self-sufficiency as a Nation. President Trump and Vice President Pence have been strong supporters of the “all of the above” energy approach. This includes greater oil, natural gas, and renewable fuel production. For agriculture, after decades of inaction by previous Administrations, the Trump

Administration allowed year-round sales of E-15. When implementing the Renewable Fuel Standard, the President decided in favor of farmers and said from now on 15 billion gallons of ethanol must mean 15 billion gallons and shouldn’t be undermined by small refinery waivers. Further, to permanently boost market demand for ethanol and biodiesel, the Trump Administration is implementing a Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program to expand the infrastructure and increase the nation-wide distribution of biofuels. The Trump Administration also is working hard to expand export sales of ethanol around the world including to China, Brazil, Mexico and other markets. Finally, given the vast potential of the bioeconomy to our Nation, foresters, and farmers, the Trump Administration is taking action to recognize that renewable energy produced from forests and agricultural crops should be exempted from regulation and is good for the environment, foresters, farmers, and the U.S. economy.

A strong underlying economy and broader job creation across the country that my Administration has achieved and will achieve again as we overcome this national pandemic will be the greatest driver of renewable energy demand.

Investment in our nation’s critical infrastructure will also drive demand for these incredible products in my second term.



Renewable fuels are vital to the future of rural America—and the climate. The Biden-Harris Plan will invest [\\$400 billion in clean energy research, innovation, and deployment](#) – more than twice what America spent to put a man on the moon. And, as part of this effort, developing the next generation of biofuels will be a top priority. The Biden-Harris Plan will invest in research to develop cellu-

losic biofuels in a manner that protects our soil and water and addresses the challenge of climate change, while turning grass, crop residues, and other biomass into fuel. Doubling down on these liquid fuels of the future will not only make value-added agriculture a key part of the solution to climate change – reducing emissions in planes, ships, and other forms of transportation – but will also create quality jobs across rural America. From day one, we will use every tool at our disposal, including the federal fleet and the federal government’s purchasing power, to promote and advance renewable energy, ethanol, and other biofuels to help rural America and our nation’s farmers, and will honor the critical role the renewable fuel industry plays in supporting the rural economy and the leadership role American agriculture will play in our fight against climate change.

Our Administration will also invest in renewable energy sources like wind and solar. President Obama put Joe in charge of the Recovery Act, which invested more than [\\$90 billion](#) in clean energy technology. Those investments contributed to a [doubling](#) of the share of domestically produced wind turbine components and produced a dramatic [decrease](#) in solar costs, making wind and solar power cost-competitive. We will build on the Recovery Act by set-

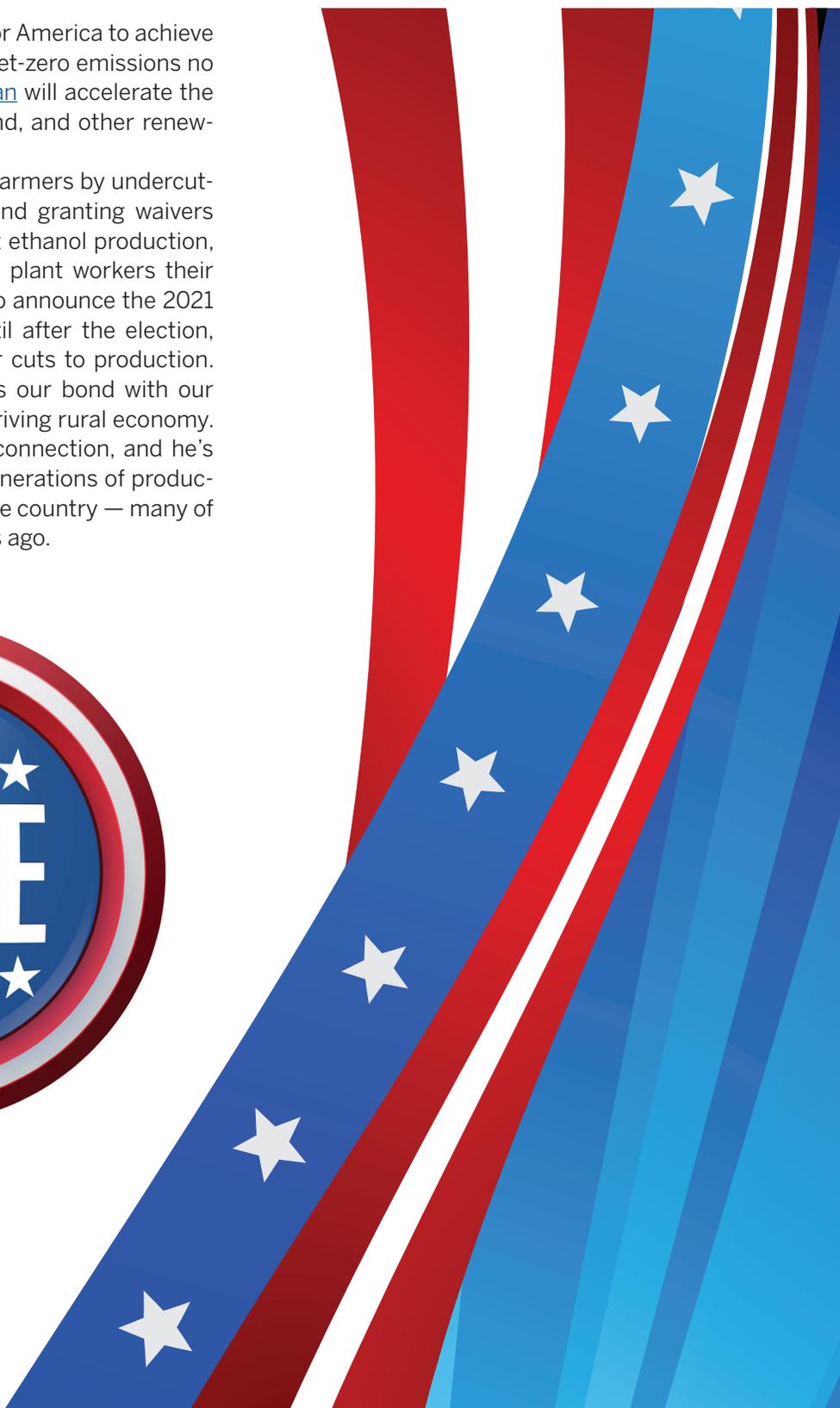
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Energy *continued...*

ting an ambitious but essential goal for America to achieve a 100% clean energy economy and net-zero emissions no later than 2050. Our [clean energy plan](#) will accelerate the already dramatic growth of solar, wind, and other renewable energy sources.

President Trump has sold out our farmers by undercutting the Renewable Fuel Standard and granting waivers to Big Oil. Those waivers severely cut ethanol production, costing farmers income and ethanol plant workers their jobs. Now, President Trump refuses to announce the 2021 renewable fuel production levels until after the election, leaving farmers concerned of further cuts to production. The Renewable Fuel Standard marks our bond with our farmers and our commitment to a thriving rural economy. Donald Trump doesn't respect that connection, and he's thrown it away to the detriment of generations of producers across the Midwest and around the country — many of whom put their trust in him four years ago.



Regulatory Reform

All Americans have an interest in a regulatory process that is transparent and fact-based, respects the will of Congress, and observes the separation of powers in the Constitution. Federal regulations have a direct impact on farmers and ranchers, and over the years, the breadth and extent of that regulatory landscape have changed.

As president, what actions would you take to ensure that the federal government's regulatory burden on businesses such as farming and ranching is consistent with congressional intent? Will you support regulatory reform to ensure that federal regulations meet a cost-benefit test and make the process of writing new regulations more transparent, and if so, how?



From day 1, the Trump/Pence Administration has sought to lift the undue regulatory burdens that had been placed on farmers and ranchers during the Obama/Biden Administration. With the 2 for 1 directive, any new regulation had to also be accompanied by a removal of 2 existing regulations. The Trump/Pence Administration has exceeded even that expectation

since taking office.

The Obama/Biden Administration unleashed hundreds of rules that saddled the US economy with hundreds of billions of dollars of increased costs. No better example of the regulatory burden of the Obama/Biden Administration is in the agriculture and food arena. The Trump/Pence Administration made deregulation a cornerstone of its economic plan. This led to greater economic growth, higher employment, and increased profitability for small business, including farmers and ranchers.

The Obama-Biden Administration pursued a more burdensome regulatory agenda for farmers than any previous administration. From using the endangered species act to cut off water and operational flexibility, to creating OSHA standards that didn't recognize the unique aspects of farming, to making the H-2A program

unworkable and moving slowly to address delays when they occurred, to climate policy that would penalize farmers for their productivity. At almost every turn, the Obama-Biden administration sought to impose greater labor, tax, and environmental regulations on our hard working farmers.

In the agriculture sector the Trump Administration has advanced rules related to organic agriculture, biotech, livestock marketing, nutrition programs, school meals standards, and numerous Farm Bill programs that have eased burdens on farmers and ranchers, and eliminated disincentives to productivity.

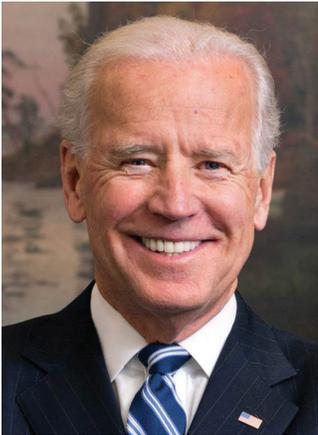
Additionally, the Trump/Pence Administration has pursued significant reform of NEPA—recently rolling out the first overhaul of the National Environmental Policy Act in over 30 years. This will greatly reduce the timeline for any environmental review proposed regulations and will help to avoid frivolous lawsuits that the environmental community has saddled business with. You can be assured that a Biden Administration will reverse these decisions and go in an even more radical environmental direction.

The Trump/Pence Administration will only support common sense regulations where any cost is far outweighed by the benefits, and where that cost benefit analysis considers all factors including economic and impact on rural communities. This Administration fully supports protecting our environment, but believes that human flourishing and economic growth is integral to any effective regulatory agenda.

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Regulatory Reform *continued...*



Far too often, regulatory policy has been a partisan political tool rather than a process to improve the livelihood of American families and businesses. Under our Administration, regulatory policy will again embrace the lessons and experience of experts and scientists, employing cutting-edge analysis and knowledge to guide decisions. We will listen to those that might be impact-

ed by a regulation before it is crafted. We will ensure an open, transparent deliberation on the costs and benefits of various regulations leads to better, more inclusive policy outcomes, and our administration will strictly adhere to these values at every stage of the regulatory process.



Endangered Species Act

Privately owned land provides habitat for the majority of our nation's endangered and threatened species. As a result, landowners often face harsh regulatory restrictions on their ability to use the land or, worse, lawsuits or enforcement actions. Meanwhile, few species have actually been recovered under the law. It's time to think about incentive-based programs that create a positive role for landowners in species recovery.

As president, how would you fix the broken Endangered Species Act, and what role would you assign America's landowners?



The Trump Administration worked with farmers and ranchers to improve regulations of the ESA which increased transparency and effectiveness bringing clarity to farmers, ranchers, water users, and landowners in how the law is administrated. The improved regulations among other items, deals with adding species to or removing species from the Act's pro-

tections, designating critical habitat, and covers consultations with other federal agencies.

In the first term, the Trump Administration recovered and delisted more species under the Endangered Species Act than any other President in their first term.

The Trump Administration has also proposed a definition for the term "habitat" that would be used in the context of critical habitat designations under the ESA, which will further add clarity, and improve partnerships by improving consistency and predictability around critical habitat definitions.

The Trump Administration is committed to science-based conservation with common-sense policy designed to bring the ESA into the 21st Century, while allowing farmers and ranchers to be the most productive on their land. A Biden/Harris Administration will pursue a regulatory policy more like the state of California of fish and birds over farmers and business.



As President, I will uphold the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to ensure the protection of imperiled species and to maintain our nation's wildlife heritage for future generations. The Act has prevented the extinction of more than 99% of the species it protects but with climate change and other challenges, continued success will require an increasing number of effective

partnerships between federal agencies, the states, and private landowners. This includes voluntary agreements with landowners that provide appropriate incentives to improve habitat conditions for listed and at-risk species. I will invest in programs such as Working Lands for Wildlife within the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) at USDA that provide incentives, including regulatory certainty, for landowners to engage in voluntary restoration efforts on their lands which create or restore habitats where wildlife thrive and landowners in rural communities can prosper. The Sage Grouse Initiative, developed during the Obama-Biden Administration, is a good example of how our Administration will approach the Endangered Species Act. The Initiative created a productive partnership between the federal and state governments and ranchers to help protect key habitat and avoid the need to list the greater sage grouse as threatened or endangered under the ESA.

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Clean Water

The Navigable Waters Protection Rule replaces the 2015 Waters of the United States rule and defines federal water jurisdiction while continuing to protect water quality. The rule will make water and land protection, management and planning more efficient and effective by drawing clearer lines between areas subject to federal versus state jurisdiction and clarifying that usually dry areas should no longer be considered federally regulated waters.

As president, do you support the Navigable Waters Protection Rule and would you retain it?



The Obama/Biden Administration implemented rules at EPA that would have made ditches and temporary ponds subject to environmental oversight and regulation. The Trump/Pence Administration completely rewrote this rule to directly address the abuses of the WOTUS rule and bring common sense back to what truly is a navigable water. The net result is a big

win for farmers and ranchers who faced enormous regulatory and legal costs because of the far overreaching WOTUS rule imposed by the Obama/Biden Administration.

The Trump/Pence Administration heard the concerns of Farmers and Ranchers across this country about the impact of this misguided Obama-Biden rule that made no sense for rural American, we replaced it, and we will continue to fight any challenges that arise in the courts on this issue.

The Trump/Pence Administration will continue to fight against regulations like the WOTUS rule, a Biden Administration will not only not fight against such decisions they will let radical environmental activities write new and worse rules for farmers and ranchers than we have ever seen.



We can all agree that threats to our water system are threats to our quality of life. In addition to the need for clean drinking water, major sectors of the economy, including agriculture, energy, manufacturing, and recreation all depend on clean and reliable water supplies. To address the broad needs concerning water resources, we will focus on investments in

new water infrastructure, the repair of water pipelines and sewer systems, replacement of lead service pipes, upgrade of treatment plants, and the integration of efficiency and water quality monitoring technologies. We will also take actions to protect our watersheds and ensure their resiliency by conserving and restoring wetlands and developing green infrastructure, as well as holding polluters accountable and addressing historic environmental injustice. Given the importance to human health, the economy, and the environment, our Administration will review the Navigable Waters Protection Rule to ensure appropriate protections are in place to protect and improve water quality for the benefit of all citizens. We will work closely with farmers and ranchers to promote clarity and certainty by maintaining previous exemptions and exclusions upon which the agricultural community have come to rely. With this and other actions, we will work closely with our agricultural partners to ensure a bright future for rural communities.

Biotechnology

Protecting farmers' access to modern farming technology, veterinary medications and crop protection tools is important for farmers and ranchers. Our future food security will depend on science, technology and innovation to increase efficiency, adapt to droughts and fight plant diseases. Agricultural biotechnology and other new crop development techniques will prove vital.

As president, how would you ensure that new traits are reviewed expeditiously, that USDA's GMO disclosure rules are focused on science, and that solutions from science and technology are harnessed to meet the challenge of feeding a growing world?



President Trump will continue to make regulatory decisions, including biotechnology approvals based upon the very best available scientific data. President Trump will never regulate farmers based upon some hot trend on social media and he will continue to insist that our trading partners adopt these same rules in order to do business with the U.S.

The Trump/Pence Administration strongly supports ag biotechnology and the use more broadly of technology in the agriculture and food industry. Combining ag biotechnology with increased data will be the basis of the next "Green Revolution" in agriculture. Contrast that with a Biden Administration who will side with environmental activists to reduce access to key chemicals, biotech seeds, and other types of technology that are critical to the future success for our Nation's farmers and ranchers. The Trump/Pence Administration supports innovation, technology and improved data to help farmers lower their costs, increase their revenue and enhance their profitability.

The Trump/Pence Administration oversaw the writing of the regulations to implement the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Act which provides farmers much needed access to ag biotechnology while providing consumers information about the food they eat.



Our country's agricultural sector features the most productive, innovative farmers and scientists in the world. Undertaking continued investment in innovation and technological advances will allow our farmers and ranchers to remain world leaders in agricultural production, benefiting workers, businesses, consumers, and exporters alike--and our administration

commits to supporting the research and technological development necessary to achieve this. In addition, in leadership roles across our administration, we will appoint officials who value and invoke scientific evidence to guide decision making and the regulatory process, as opposed to using their positions to score political points or to profit personally.

Agricultural Labor

Farmers and ranchers need a reliable, skilled workforce. Farm work is challenging, often seasonal and transitory, and with fewer and fewer Americans growing up on the farm, it's increasingly difficult to find American workers attracted to these kinds of jobs. Farm labor can't all be replaced by machines, either.

As president, what would you do to reform and resolve the critical labor shortage that many farmers and ranchers face each year? How would you address the issue of undocumented workers who are already working on farms across America, as well as the need for a reformed H-2A program that would help provide a long-term agricultural workforce?



President Trump has taken strong actions to deal with the immigration and labor challenges facing our country. The Trump/Pence administration understands the labor shortages facing agriculture and the unique challenges our farmers face.

A strong agricultural labor system depends on being able to know who is coming to our country,

President Trump began building the wall shortly after being elected in 2016.

The Trump/Pence Administration has also taken steps to streamline the current H-2A program, including ensuring agriculture can continue to get the farmworkers they need during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Administration worked to ensure common sense flexibilities were deployed to allow H-2A workers to continue working on our farms and moving to new employers that had need of this critical labor.

A Biden Administration is simply interested in giving

amnesty to all the people here illegally right now, they will not reform our currently outdated legal immigration system to ensure we have the kind of labor we need to meet the needs of our farmers, ranchers and other employers who need seasonal labor.

As President Trump said at the 100 year anniversary Farm Bureau Convention, "When we have proper security, people aren't going to come, except for the people we want to come...We're going to make that actually easier for them--to help the farmers...I'm going to make that easier for them to come in and to work the farms. You've had some people for 20, 25 years. They're incredible. Then they go home and they can't get back in. That's not going to happen."

The Obama-Biden Administration had 8 years and failed to fix our immigration system, and right now Democrats in Congress do not want to negotiate a deal that can be signed because they think it will help them in November. Immigration reform must secure our borders and also ensure our system works for our economy, including making sure farmers have access to the labor they need. The Trump/Pence Administration is eager to work with Congress to finally deal with all these issues, and we think there will be opportunity to do just that in a second term.

Agricultural Labor *continued...*



Farm workers have always been essential to working our farms and feeding our country. A Biden-Harris Administration will provide a path to legalization for agricultural workers who have worked for years on U.S. farms and continue to work in agriculture. Securing adequate, seasonal help in the agricultural sector can be inefficient and difficult to navigate, causing people

to avoid or exploit the system, even when jobs remain unfilled. We support compromise legislation between farmworkers and the agricultural sector that will provide legal status based on prior agricultural work history, and a faster-track to a green card and ultimately citizenship. And we will ensure farm workers are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve, regardless of immigration status and ensure labor and safety rules, including overtime, humane living conditions, and protection from pesticide and heat exposure, are enforced with respect to these particularly vulnerable working people.



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Sustainability and Climate Change

Using innovative farm equipment, better seeds, green energy and climate-smart practices, U.S. farmers and ranchers are producing more food, renewable fuel and fiber than ever before, while using less water, protecting against erosion and conserving more soil, avoiding nutrient loss, increasing wildlife habitat and improving biodiversity. Less than 10% of total U.S. GHG emissions stem from agriculture. In fact, efficiency gains are so significant that U.S. agriculture would have needed nearly 100 million more acres in 1990 to match 2018 production levels. At the same time, farmers' commitment to conservation is clear. More than 140 million acres are enrolled in federal conservation programs, which equals the total land area of California and New York combined.

As president, how would you ensure that climate regulations do not hamper American productivity and competitiveness?



President Trump believes that American farmers are the most sustainable in the world and we should be thanking them rather than thinking of new ways to regulate them. Any new sustainability or climate requirements must be science based and not result in tighter profit margins for farmers. This would hurt beginning and smaller farmers the most.

The number one stewards protecting natural resources are our nation's farmers and ranchers. The Trump/Pence Administration has been strong supporters of increased funding of voluntary conservation programs included in the 2018 Farm Bill that helped farmers protect our precious natural resources, including water quality, while also enhancing soil health.

A Biden Administration will be controlled by environmental activists that would be working from day 1 to implement the Green New Deal which would have devastating impacts on farmers and ranchers.

The Trump/Pence Administration launched the Ag Innovation Agenda earlier this year with the goal of telling the story of agriculture's contribution to the economy and the environment, starting to set the benchmarks for how the sector can be a part of solutions, not demonized as the problem.



Many farmers are some of the best stewards of our land, air, and water. But climate change poses an existential threat to all of us -- including farmers. We need to combat climate change, but in doing so can create new opportunities and new sorts of revenues for farmers. The government needs to partner with farmers to accelerate progress toward net-zero emissions. We will

ensure our agricultural sector is the first in the world to achieve net-zero emissions, and that our farmers earn income as we meet this milestone. Toward this end, a Biden-Harris Administration will dramatically expand and fortify the pioneering Conservation Stewardship Program, created by former Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Tom Harkin, to support farm income through payments based on farmers' practices to protect the environment, including carbon sequestration. In addition to seeking full federal funding for the program, a Biden-Harris Administration will ensure the program can participate in carbon markets. Corporations, individuals, and foundations interested in promoting greenhouse gas reductions could offset their emissions by contributing to Conservation Stewardship Program payments to farmers for those sequestering carbon — for example, through cover crops. This will not only help combat climate change, but also create additional revenue sources for farmers at a time when many are struggling to make ends meet. And, this approach will create a whole series of new businesses that

Sustainability and Climate Change *continued...*

survey, measure, certify, and quantify conservation results. In addition, a Biden-Harris Administration will make a significant investment in research to refine practices to build soil carbon while maximizing farm and ranch productivity. Soil is the next frontier for storing carbon.

Finally, investments in bio-based manufacturing will create new revenue opportunities for farmers and ranchers as they convert ag waste in chemicals, fabrics, fibers, fuels, and other materials. This will increase farm income and create more good-paying manufacturing jobs, particularly in rural America. A Biden-Harris Administration is committed to creating incentive-based partnerships between farmers and the federal government to further sustainable practices and help the climate. We recognize the important role animal agriculture plays in farm income and rural jobs and will be a strong partner to this sector.



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Rural Life and Health

Rural communities play an important role in our nation's economy. At the time of the 2010 Decennial Census, almost 60 million people, about 19% of the population, lived in rural areas of the United States, home to a majority of U.S. manufacturing, farming and ranching. Greater access to broadband and healthcare in rural areas, enhanced infrastructure investment, reducing opioid addiction, addressing mental health challenges and helping rural economies via rural entrepreneurship and Main Street-friendly tax policies are important components to revitalize rural America.

As president, how would you ensure that rural Americans have economic opportunity, greater access to broadband and healthcare, and well-maintained infrastructure to move food, fiber and fuel to consumers and ports, which are all necessary for a sustainable future?



A major focus of the Trump Presidency has been to help address the rural/urban divide. Rural America is home to over 60 million Americans who represent the best of our Nation's values--hard work, love of country, and embracing freedom--yet oftentimes do not have access to the tools to meet the demands of a growing global economy. It is for this reason that the

Trump/Pence Administration has made it a goal to gain access for the 18 million Americans that do not have access to high speed internet. The Trump/Pence Administration has worked to provide more funding through the FCC and USDA's ReConnect Program to address this key issue. Bridging the internet divide in rural America will help to provide better education, improved telemedicine, as well as give farmers and ranchers more tools to produce our Nation's food and fiber more profitably. High speed internet access is the lynchpin for the data and technology revolution occurring in agriculture that will benefit farmers and ranchers, the environment and consumers.

Farmers face significant challenges due to the vagaries of weather and other factors that are beyond their control. This can provide enormous stress on farmers and ranchers. For this reason, the Administration has supported increased funding for mental health needs for rural Americans. In addition, the White House has led efforts to address the epidemic of opioid use in rural America.



Rural America is home to [roughly 20%](#) of Americans, but we are all connected to rural communities in many ways. Rural Americans fuel us and feed us. Rural lands provide us with places to spend time outdoors with friends and family and relax.

A healthy, vibrant rural America is essential to the success of our country. Yet in small town after small town, parents watch their kids and grandkids leave rural communities because there just is not enough opportunity for them at home. For too many rural Americans, a pathway to the middle class is out of reach if they stay in their rural communities.

The moral obligation of our time is rebuilding the middle class, so that this time everyone comes along regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or zip code. It should not be dependent on whether they live in a city center, a small town, or a remote area. Everyone means everyone.

We will build a pathway to the middle class for rural Americans, in rural America. We will pursue a rural economic development strategy that partners with rural communities to invest in their unique assets, with the goal of giving young people more options to live, work, and raise the next generation in rural America. It's not just good for those in rural America, it's good for everyone across our country. Our full plan for rural America can be viewed at <https://joebiden.com/rural/> but below

Rural Life and Health *continued...*

are some of our top priorities:

Broadband: High-speed broadband is essential in the 21st Century economy. Yet far too many rural communities still don't have access to it. Rural Americans are [over 10 times more likely](#) than urban residents to lack quality broadband access. At a time when so many jobs and businesses could be located anywhere, high-speed internet access should be a great economic equalizer for rural America, not another economic disadvantage. Investing \$20 billion in rural broadband infrastructure has the potential to create more than [a quarter million new jobs](#). The Biden-Harris Plan will triple [Community Connect](#) broadband grants and partner with municipal utilities to bring cutting-edge broadband connections to communities across rural America.

Health care: Rural America faces unique challenges and opportunities when it comes to access to quality health care. In many rural communities, the local hospital is one of the largest – if not the largest – employers. Keeping our rural hospitals open is critical not only for saving lives, but also for supporting local economies in rural America. Yet, since 2010, more than [100 rural hospitals](#) across the United States have closed. Combined, these closures represent the loss of over [10,000 jobs](#). And, they could mean life or death for patients in rural communities. Already, someone injured in a rural area has to travel, on average, [nearly twice as far](#) to get to the closest hospital as someone injured in an urban area. These critical moments lost in travel time are one reason an estimated [60%](#) of all trauma fatalities occur in rural communities.

You can read our full health care plan [here](#). To specifically help rural Americans, our plan will also:

Keep our rural hospitals open by:

- **Defending the Affordable Care Act.** The first step to save our rural hospitals is to defend the Affordable Care Act. In fact, one proposal to repeal the Affordable Care Act would have caused [\\$1.7 billion in cuts to rural hospitals, 181 additional rural hospitals “forced into the red,” and nearly 38,000 lost jobs](#). Our Administration is not going to eliminate the Affordable Care Act, we're going to build on it.

- **Finishing the job of expanding coverage to low-income adults.** [Research](#) found that, in states that took up the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion, the expansion was a critical tool in keeping rural hospitals open. Yet, [14 states](#) have still not expanded Medicaid eligibility, and

[an estimated 4.9 million individuals](#) would be eligible for coverage but for their state's inaction. My plan will enroll all of these individuals in a new public option, without a premium and with benefits like those offered in Medicaid. This isn't just the right thing to do, it will help rural hospitals remain solvent. And, under the Biden-Harris Plan, which preserves individuals' ability to choose private insurance, these hospitals won't be threatened by having to get by on low Medicare reimbursement rates for all.

- **Giving rural hospitals the flexibility they need to keep their doors open and care for their patients.**

The Biden-Harris Administration will provide rural health care providers with funding and flexibility necessary to identify, test, and deploy innovative approaches to keeping their doors open and providing care for the unique needs of rural The Affordable Care Act supports this type of innovation, for example through demonstration projects like the [Pennsylvania Rural Health Model](#), which is giving rural hospitals in the state more flexibility to decide how best to spend dollars to improve the health of the population they serve. The Biden-Harris Plan will expand funding for these types of demonstration projects, and then accelerate efforts to replicate proven models to other rural hospitals across the country. And, the Biden-Harris Plan will identify and eliminate federal rules making it harder for rural hospitals to serve their communities. For example, many rural hospitals serving small populations do not have enough patients to maintain inpatient care, but those communities still need a 24/7 emergency department. One approach to ensure they can keep their doors open is to create a new designation, the Community Outpatient Hospital, as proposed in the bipartisan [Save Rural Hospitals Act](#). The Biden-Harris Administration will make sure the federal government is helping rural hospitals meet community needs, not serving as a roadblock.

- **Adequately funding our rural hospitals.** To help hospitals keep their doors open, we support the elimination of payment cuts and additional payments for rural hospitals as detailed in the bipartisan Save Rural Hospitals Act.

Expand primary care and innovative health care delivery models in rural communities by:

- **Doubling funding for community health centers.** Community health centers provide primary, prenatal, and other important care to underserved populations. The Biden-Harris Plan will double the federal investment

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Rural Life and Health *continued...*

in these centers, expanding access to high quality health care for the populations that need it most. More than half of community health centers are in rural areas.

• **Equipping rural community health centers to be hubs for healthy communities.** We will establish a grant program to help community health centers hire social workers or other professionals to coordinate resources necessary for community health, such as transportation to get patients to health centers and connections to housing and nutrition services.

• **Expanding the pipeline of rural health care providers.** The Biden-Harris Administration will use a comprehensive approach to increase the number of rural individuals going to medical school or other training programs and returning or staying in rural communities to provide care, with a focus on primary care physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, and other in-demand providers. This initiative will include additional funding for residency programs in rural areas, expanding the [National Health Service Corps](#), and developing high school-community-college-health-center partnerships to inspire rural youth to pursue jobs in health care and pursue the advanced credits or industry credentials that will put them on the path to success in the field.

Infrastructure: We will make smart infrastructure investments to rebuild the nation and to ensure that our buildings, water, transportation, and energy infrastructure can meet America's economic needs and withstand the impacts of climate change. My administration will use this infrastructure funding to ensure that rural communities across the country have access to clean, safe drinking water. We will modernize the lock and dam system vital to getting rural products to markets, leveraging the federal resources to the maximum extent possible with the private sector. And, we will build the roads to give farms and small town businesses access to markets and an efficient means to participate in the world economy.

Opioid Crisis and Substance Use Disorder Treatment: You can read our full plan to end the opioid crisis [HERE](#). As it relates to rural communities, we will pursue comprehensive strategies to expand access to treatment, particularly in rural and urban communities with high rates of substance use disorders and a lack of access to substance use disorder treatment services. My administration will invest \$75 billion in flexible grants to states and localities for prevention, treatment, and recovery efforts. State and local agencies will also be able to use funds to enhance data systems allowing them to better target resources to

individuals and communities most in need of support. As a condition for receiving funding, grant recipients will have to provide long-term, comprehensive strategic plans that address the multifaceted nature of the substance use disorder crisis. Funds may be used to:

- Invest in evidence-based, cost-effective prevention programs in schools and communities to reduce the development of substance use disorders.

- Mitigate harms from opioid and other drug use, including overdoses. Local communities will be able to use the funds to implement evidence-based programs designed to stop the spread of diseases like hepatitis C and HIV, including syringe service programs, or to scale up innovative programs like the [safe station initiative](#) started in Manchester, New Hampshire, which allows those seeking help to go to fire stations in order to be connected to treatment and recovery services.

- Expand access to ongoing treatment and recovery services. Communities will be able to use funds to increase access to substance use disorder and mental health treatment and other services to support long-term recovery, including peer support networks and recovery coaches, and better integrate primary care and behavioral health. Recognizing the strong evidence that social supports, including family support, may have a positive impact on the treatment of [HIV](#), we will support the development of family-centered models for substance use disorder treatment and recovery.

Mental health: We will build new health clinics and deploy telehealth in rural America. The Obama-Biden Administration successfully used the [USDA Community Facility Direct Loan Grant Program](#) to build rural hospitals and mental health clinics across rural America and equip them with the best technology. A Biden-Harris Administration will expand this grant funding, with a focus on accelerating the deployment of telehealth for mental health and specialty care. Telehealth – the use of videoconferencing and other technology to provide remote care – can be a vital resource for rural communities with limited access to providers.

Economic development: Entrepreneurs in small towns and rural areas should have access to the capital they need to realize their dreams. A Biden-Harris Administration will dramatically expand funding for Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and the Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program to help rural entrepreneurs. We will expand the number of [Rural Business Investment Companies](#) to help rural companies obtain capital.

Added Conclusion



The Trump Administration believes farmers and ranchers have a much better ability to manage and care for their land than a bureaucrat in Washington. President Trump has spent his career building things, and has deep affection for our patriotic farmers because they don't make excuses, they don't complain, they just get up every morning with the goal of making this country great and sharing the bounty of their hard work with their fellow citizens.



NOTE: The Biden team was offered the opportunity to provide closing remarks. In an email, the campaign stated "we appreciate the opportunity but we're going to let the campaign's answers to the questions stand on their own."

The entire Democrat party is more controlled by coastal elites and only pays attention to rural America and farmers for a short time every 4 years when they want that support in states that depend on a strong farm economy. While the Obama-Biden Administration saddled farmers with countless regulations and burdens, a Biden Administration, controlled by AOC environmental activists would make farmers long for earlier days.

Farmers speak directly, they keep their word, they deliver, they are patriots. Like our country's farmers and ranchers, President Trump has been clear about the agenda he would pursue, and he has kept his word...Promises Made, Promises Kept. With your support, our farmers and ranchers will be leaders of the Great American Comeback, the Trump/Pence Administration will continue to make our farm communities great again.



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