

# Conservative

## Free-Market Capitalism



Agriculture

## BIG PICTURE

When we leave markets alone to self-adjust, firms adapt and innovate, and we get the food we want at the right price.

## POLICY POSITION

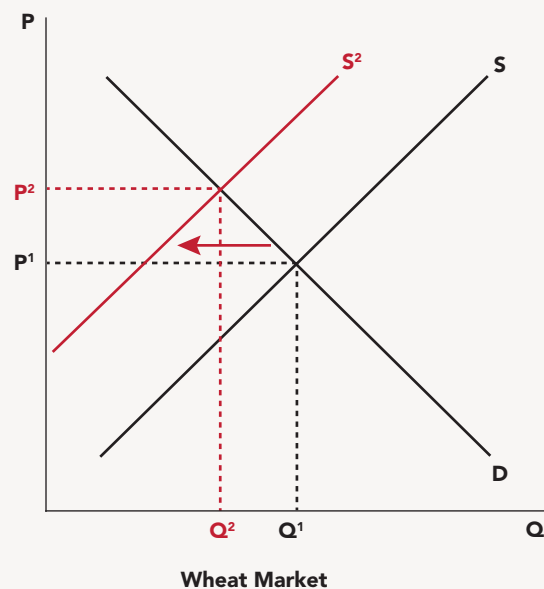
Instability in farming threatens food security, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies distort price signals, throw markets off balance, and ruin international relations.
- ▶ Radical policies jeopardize our ability to feed ourselves because there is no profit motive and because no one can act without committee approval.

## SOLUTION

Reject agricultural subsidies and replace them with unfettered price signals to ensure a secure food system:

- Private crop insurance markets emerge.
- Futures trading keeps farmers in business.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Agriculture Talking Points: Conservative

1. Capitalism works best when we leave it alone. The free-market approach is simple and elegant: the consumer and the farmer meet in a market without any government interference, and since farmers want to make money, they'll produce what people want to buy. That's how we get the food we want at the right price. The free market is a win-win every time for suppliers and demanders.
2. There's a saying that every crisis is an opportunity. Crisis and opportunity are two sides of the same coin. Instability in agriculture gives farmers an opportunity to innovate and adapt. For instance, since they know there will be years of drought, firms have an incentive to develop crops that use less water. Innovation is how we get a growing and healthy economy. Firms that are flexible and can respond to change will survive, and that's how it should be.
3. Liberal subsidies are supposed to fix a problem, but they end up creating more problems because government handouts reward firms for stagnating. Why should farmers adopt better business practices or meet changing market demands when the heavy hand of government pays them not to? The solution is simple: get rid of subsidies and let farmers come up with their own creative solutions. Let's stop enabling an entire industry to run on welfare.
4. Agricultural subsidies are a huge waste of taxpayer dollars. We pay farmers to overproduce crops that nobody wants. All that excess food floods the market, and we end up wasting our scarce resources. And it gets worse—because then we dump those products on developing countries, which pushes their own farmers out of business and causes international trade crises. Liberals, you've been running this scam on the American taxpayer for nearly a hundred years. It's time to get rid of subsidies.
5. No one can possibly plan the economy by committee—and that's especially true in agriculture. The radical idea of food security councils is a disaster waiting to happen. They are doomed to fail because there is no possible way any one person or group could ever figure out how to allocate resources to the right place, at the right time, in the right amounts to give us the wide variety of food we want in the quantities we need.
6. Radicals, your emergency and innovation fund can't solve the problem of instability in agriculture because your democratic socialist economy generates no money. Why? Because you reject the profit motive. That means there's no incentive for anyone to work hard or innovate. It's the profit motive that leads agribusiness to invest in research and development so we can go to the store and buy food that's more nutritious and won't spoil as quickly. Without the profit motive, our ability to feed ourselves is doomed to fail.
7. Is there instability in agriculture? Of course there is! That's why farmers buy crop insurance policies to mitigate the risk of loss in case of a disaster. And that's why they make deals with buyers to sell a portion of their future harvest at a fixed price. They can take measures on their own to make it possible to stay in business even if the price falls. This is how farmers have historically adapted and innovated to ensure that we get the food we want and need.
8. Our nation is most secure and our farming industry is most robust when we produce efficiently, which means leaving markets alone to self-adjust. That brings us the variety of foods we want in the right quantities at the right prices. We can choose whatever diets we want without the government imposing its will on our dinner plates. All we need to do is to let the invisible hand guide farmers to produce the food our nation actually wants and needs.

# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



Agriculture

## BIG PICTURE

The public-private partnership secures our food supply by preserving our farming industry, which protects our national security and brings us the food we want and need.

## POLICY POSITION

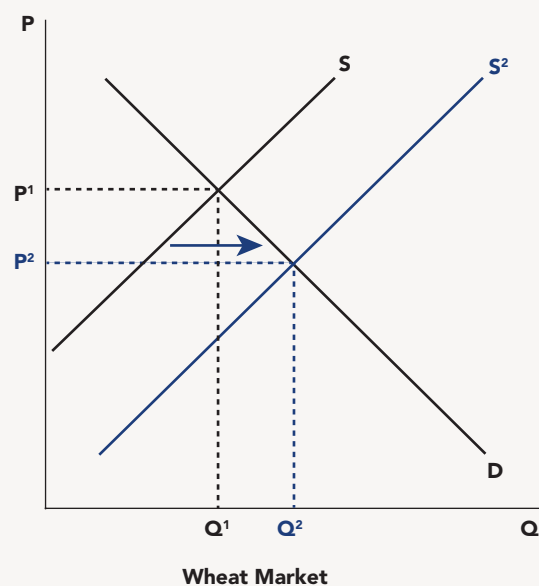
Instability in farming threatens food security, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies are just subsidies by a different name, but burdened with suffocating red tape, limited choices, and food shortages.
- ▶ Conservative policies give us a four-way loss: bad for farmers, bad for consumers, bad for national security, and bad for international relations.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen agricultural subsidies to ensure a secure food system:

- Expand protections for our food independence.
- Preserve the nation's farmland.



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## Agriculture Talking Points: Liberal

1. Farmers are the quiet, hardworking heroes of our country. Without putting on a uniform or taking up arms, they safeguard our national security by ensuring our food independence. The public-private partnership keeps us from becoming vulnerable to foreign powers for our very survival because government helps farms stay in production. It also gives farmers peace of mind when their livelihoods—and our nation's food security—are threatened.
2. Agriculture is a risky business. No one can predict the weather or any other unexpected event that interrupts food production, such as terrorism, wars, or a pandemic. But while those factors could affect our food supply, they don't because of fair-market capitalism. We don't have to worry about empty shelves at the grocery store, because our farming industry is protected by responsible government intervention.
3. The radical idea to use food security councils to create emergency and innovation funds is what we already have. It's called "subsidies." They just came up with a fancy new name for crop insurance, disaster assistance, and more. But their food security councils are impractical. We can't ask people with busy lives and businesses to sit through endless committee meetings. The USDA has paid experts and mechanisms in place to get feedback from stakeholders. Radicals waste time trying to fix what isn't broken.
4. Radicals, if you want organic, free-range, non-GMO products, fair-market capitalism protects farmers and ensures that your local store is stocked with safe, reliable food. But, without the profit motive and private ownership, we'll be left with food shortages, higher prices, and fewer choices. You throw out the very system that creates our wealth. Democratic socialism has the equation wrong: it's democracy plus capitalism with a government partner, not democracy plus dead-end socialism, which brings us maximum well-being.
5. The conservative idea that in times of crisis farmers adapt and innovate sounds good on paper, but without subsidies, farmers "adapt" by selling off their land to developers. Once farmland is turned into a housing development, a shopping mall, or a parking lot, it's lost forever to food production. Without arable land, our whole nation becomes dependent on other countries for our food. This is a disaster for national sovereignty.
6. Conservatives, farmers can't afford private insurance on their own, and futures markets are a gamble that could easily lose them the farm. Leave it to you to reject farm subsidies, which have worked for decades. Of course there's instability in every industry, but agriculture isn't just any industry. We can't survive without food. We don't want high prices and limited products at the grocery store every time there's a drought or hurricane. Agricultural subsidies keep farmers producing in a high-risk industry.
7. Everyone needs to eat. Food is the foundation of our well-being, so it makes perfect sense to support and protect our food source—the farming industry. The helping hand of government makes it possible for farmers to sleep well at night knowing that their businesses won't go under the next time there's a weather event or human-made disaster. We can sleep well at night knowing that tomorrow, and next week, and ten years from now, our nation will be able to feed itself.
8. Can you imagine the chaos and frustration that would occur if every time there was a drought or a hurricane, we would all have to wonder if we could find the ingredients for dinner at the store, and if we could afford them? Agricultural subsidies give us a four-way win: farmers win because they stay in business, consumers win with low prices and availability of the food we want, the country wins because we can depend on ourselves for a secure food system, and the developing world wins when we give it our surplus food.

# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Agriculture

## BIG PICTURE

Participatory governance brings the nation a stable, healthy, and balanced food system by funding innovation and best practices to plan and prepare for catastrophes.

## POLICY POSITION

Instability in farming threatens food security, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies enable big ag to give us unhealthy, addictive food and the illusion of choice.
- ▶ Liberal policies only serve to feed big ag, which exploits workers, ruins the land, and destroys farming communities.

## SOLUTION

Replace agricultural subsidies in capitalism with food security council policies in democratic socialism to ensure a secure food system:

- Create emergency and innovation funds.
- Preserve and support farming communities.



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## Agriculture Talking Points: Radical

1. With participatory governance, we plan ahead instead of waiting for disaster to strike farms and wipe them out. Food security councils invest in research and development of drought-resistant crops, water-harvesting systems, and sustainable equipment. When all the stakeholders have a place at the table and real power to make decisions, we can fund innovations and best practices to make our food system more secure. This is how we get a sustainable and secure food system.
2. Everybody's gotta eat! Food security councils make sure we have the food we want because they understand what it takes for farms to succeed, what consumers want, and how to feed our nation. Why? The people at the table represent all the stakeholders. They are the farmers, the consumers, the industry experts, the environmentalists, the hydrologists, our public officials, and more. With policies in hand, the elected officials are tasked with representing those decisions in their larger legislative arenas.
3. Conservatives, you say the profit motive makes our lives better, but all I see are supermarkets filled with foods that make us sick. Big ag is killing us with obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Because of capitalist competition, they hire food scientists to design our meals, snacks, and drinks to be addictive so we'll keep buying more and more. Instead of being in the business of feeding people healthy food that sustains us, their business is all about making the most profit. In the meantime, we get sicker and more addicted.
4. The conservative idea to do nothing is dangerous. The food system is vulnerable to weather and human-made disasters. Without a plan in place, the most vulnerable farms go under, and greedy multinational corporations happily swoop in and buy them up for a pittance. We can't afford to lose farming communities to outside investors. We need people who care for the land because they live and work there, and because they want to sustain it for their children and grandchildren.
5. The liberal policy of subsidies underwrites big ag's destruction of our food system, our health, and our future. Our tax dollars fund unsustainable, dangerous practices like producing dairy with hormones and spraying our vegetables with toxic chemicals. Then liberals turn around and dump the leftovers on poor countries. This drives their farmers out of business, and entire nations become dependent on our handouts to survive. Liberals' intentions may have been humanitarian, but their policies destroy food systems throughout the world.
6. Let's be honest about what's really going on here, liberals: rich agribusiness pays off politicians to push farm subsidies in their favor. This is an example of crony capitalism at its worst. Your subsidies are a well-packaged scam to make taxpayers believe we're participating in a patriotic act to save the country's family farms. But in reality you have us subsidizing companies that have more money than many nations, traumatize our food system, and are in zero danger of going out of business.
7. A stable food system isn't just about having a lot of food on the store shelves; it's about having healthy, affordable choices. In democratic socialism, we know that the farmers who produce our food care about the land and use best practices because they live in the communities where they farm, and their food not only feeds the nation, it also feeds their families and their neighbors. We can trust that the food on our plates nourishes our bodies and our whole society.
8. We all plan ahead for possible calamities. That just makes good sense. Through participatory governance, food security councils give farmers emergency and innovation funds to prepare, adapt, and recover from disasters. Farmers are not left on their own to sink or swim. With money set aside for the express purpose of helping them in times of crisis, and with research and development to strengthen their farming operations, we all win with thriving farming communities and a secure food system.

# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



Product Safety

## BIG PICTURE

Government guides firms and holds them accountable to produce reliably safe goods and services, and it provides accurate information so people can make informed choices.

## POLICY POSITION

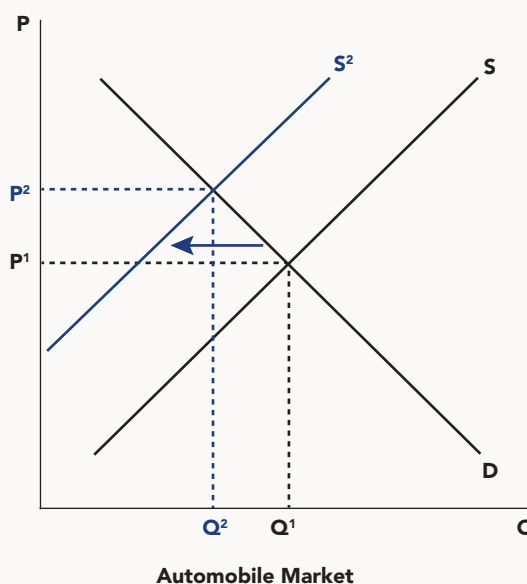
Products can cause harm, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies stifle creativity and ingenuity with burdensome and inefficient bureaucracy led by amateurs.
- ▶ Conservative policies irresponsibly lead to tragic and preventable catastrophes, and steep costs for those low prices.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen product safety regulations to ensure the protection people want:

- Expand government agencies to protect consumers.
- Hold firms accountable to do the right thing.



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## Product Safety Talking Points: Liberal

1. Do you trust that the toy you bought doesn't have lead paint on it? You can trust it because we have product safety regulations and government agencies to enforce them. It's a fact of life that sometimes products can cause harm. But we mitigate the risks through sensible safety standards. We're fortunate to have a government with the resources and reach to do this work for us. We don't have to wait for catastrophes to happen to get the level of protection we want.
2. Money can't buy you happiness, and it can't give you back your life if you're killed in a terrible accident because of an unsafe product. That's why I have no problem paying a little bit more in taxes and slightly higher prices to be able to have products that won't harm or kill me or my loved ones—or anyone else. When government and business come together to create more safety in our products, the whole society benefits, and we all live happier, healthier, and longer lives.
3. Radicals, firms in democratic socialism end up making nothing but dull wooden toys because product safety councils of "stakeholders" decide what firms can produce and how they can make it. We all end up living in a nightmare scenario of over-caution. Toasters can catch fire? We'd better learn to heat our bread on sticks over the flame. The few products that do make it through the maze of the hazard assessment protocols might be safer, but we won't have anything that we actually want.
4. The radicals have once again come up with a genius idea: use government to make products safer. Thank you for supporting consumer protection agencies, which we already have! Without boring ourselves to death in endless product safety council meetings, fair-market capitalism has efficient government agencies with the expertise and power to oversee and enforce regulations. We can have it all without overthrowing capitalism, and that means safe products in the most wealth-generating economic system ever created.
5. Conservatives say the free market naturally brings us safe products, but we hear in the news every day about products that harm and even kill people. Maybe in the long run the market would bring us safe products, but in the meantime, people are getting sick, being maimed, and dying. Some firms promise anything to get you to buy their product, but they deliberately don't tell you about the possible negative side effects. Government makes products safer by holding firms accountable to give full disclosures to consumers.
6. You conservatives claim that consumer safety regulations do nothing more than create red tape and raise prices. Would you rather have a cheaper product that could make you sick or kill you? Or would you rather have a slightly more expensive but safer product? You are in denial about the true price of those "cheaper" products: the hospital bills, the missed work because of injuries and illness, and the funeral costs when unsafe products lead to death.
7. Our federal agencies can collect and disseminate the information about product safety that we as individuals would never be able to gather on our own. It would be impossible for an individual to amass the data necessary to do a comparative analysis for every product used in daily life. Government works for us and gets it done, and we each pay a few tax dollars to get this lifesaving service. It's a great deal. We should be grateful to live in a country where we have consumer protection agencies.
8. In capitalism, firms are motivated to make us what we want, but sometimes their products have design flaws, or the inputs they use are tainted, or the assembly is faulty. Firms get sued, and they lose money and their good reputations. Consumer protection agencies help them by creating safety standards. Because all firms must follow the same regulations, no one suffers from unfair competition. Businesses thrive and consumers stay safe thanks to the public-private partnership.



# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Product Safety

## BIG PICTURE

We have safe and innovative products because we harness the expertise of many stakeholders to make sure firms are both supported and held accountable.

## POLICY POSITION

Products can cause harm, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies harm consumers because in free-market capitalism unsafe products are inevitable and even acceptable when cost-effective.
- ▶ Liberal policies lull us into a false sense of security because capitalism always leads firms to value profit over the safety of people.

## SOLUTION

Replace product safety regulations in capitalism with product safety council policies in democratic socialism to ensure the protection that people want:

- Establish hazard assessment protocols.
- Firms have buy-in to produce safe products.



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## Product Safety Talking Points: Radical

1. I want to live in a society where I can trust that the products I use won't harm me. Is that too much to ask? Apparently, it is—in capitalism! There's only one way to really be sure firms are committed to making us the safest possible products, and that's through democratic socialism. Firms are pressured to do the right thing because while profit is important to any business, it's never more important than people's well-being.
2. I'm tired of worrying that my phone is giving me a brain tumor or that the airbag in my car might kill my passenger. We all want to sleep peacefully at night knowing the products in our lives aren't making us sick or harming our loved ones. And we all want to sleep peacefully at night knowing that the products we make aren't causing harm. We can have this when our economic system values the well-being of all.
3. The conservative idea to leave it alone really leaves the fox in charge of the hen house. It won't make us safer; it will do the opposite—because in free-market capitalism, profit is the incentive for firms to act. They cheap out and cut corners on safety in order to boost their bottom lines and beat out the competition. Again and again, we hear about firms who did the math and concluded that harming their customers was more profitable than making their products safe—even factoring in the high cost of lawsuits.
4. Conservatives, you say the free market gives us what we want, but the last time I checked, no one wants toxic chemicals in their food, airbags that kill front-seat passengers, or toys coated in lead paint. Your simple-minded idea that the market naturally self-adjusts to give us the safety we want is incredibly dangerous. How many will first have to die? When it's in our power to prevent tragedies, we absolutely should.
5. No amount of liberal regulations or oversight will ever fix the problem of unsafe products because fair-market capitalism has a fatal flaw: top-down governance. Politicians aren't held accountable to their constituents, and they are routinely corrupted by campaign contributions. Firms hire lobbyists to make sure that laws are written in their favor so they can make more profit at the expense of our safety. In the end, it's the people who suffer with injuries and deaths that could have—and should have—been avoided.
6. Liberals, face facts: your alphabet soup of consumer protection agencies hasn't solved the problem of unsafe products, and it never will. Government acts like the school disciplinarian, giving corporations detention and a slap on the wrist, but those firms are willing to risk being fined and continue to make unsafe products when it brings them more profit. That's business as usual in capitalism. The liberal idea of government regulation doesn't ensure our safety because it's a top-down solution in a profit-driven system.
7. Product safety councils bring together the people who have the most knowledge and experience about the product and about safety, including experts from industry, firms, consumer groups, and government. Because diverse stakeholders work together, we get the highest level of safety. Government officials convene and facilitate product safety councils and advocate for their policies in Congress, the state legislature, and so on. Good ideas percolate up and become our nation's policies, so we all have buy-in.
8. In democratic socialism we can trust that the products we use were made with our best interests in mind. Product safety councils' hazard assessment protocols guide firms to create safer products. When a new product is designed and manufactured, teams of experts assist firms to make sure there are no dangerous flaws that could cause harm. This is good for firms and for society because we get the safety we want, and firms get the support they need when they launch new and redesigned products.

# Conservative

## Free-Market Capitalism



Product Safety

## BIG PICTURE

Markets self-regulate to bring us the level of safety we want in products when we are free to choose for ourselves.

## POLICY POSITION

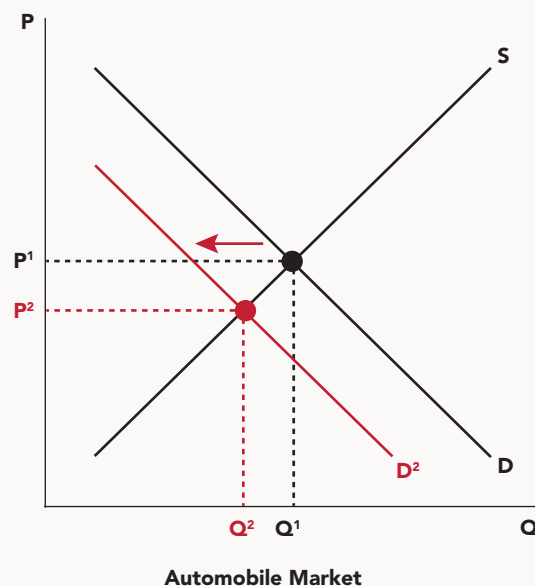
Products can cause harm to consumers, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies result in a false sense of security, fewer choices, squelched innovation, higher taxes, and higher prices.
- ▶ Radical policies are bad for business because they discourage entrepreneurs and kill the drive for progress with endless meetings and competing agendas.

## SOLUTION

Reject product safety regulations and replace them with unfettered price signals to ensure the protection people want:

- Markets for information emerge.
- Consumer demand determines the safety of goods and services.



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## Product Safety Talking Points: **Conservative**

1. The beauty of free-market capitalism is that all we have to do is leave markets alone and unsafe products will no longer be produced. The problem fixes itself because consumers vote with their dollars. They won't buy the product, and then firms will either change the product to make it safe or they'll make something else or the firm will go belly up. In any case, the unsafe product will no longer be a problem.
2. The free market works because everyone is self-interested and therefore takes responsibility for their own decisions. We get the safety we want in products by doing the research. Before we purchase something new, we naturally look up the reviews. There are countless websites dedicated to giving us information that helps us make the best decisions for ourselves. We don't need government to tell us what we can and cannot buy. We never have to trade our liberty for safety.
3. You liberals think that the FDA and OSHA and all those other government agencies are keeping us safe, but they're doing the opposite by giving consumers a false sense of security. You require people to wear seat belts, and then people drive faster because they feel invulnerable, which leads to more accidents. And all the red tape generated by those agencies keeps useful products from reaching the market because it takes so long to navigate the maze of safety regulations.
4. I don't need government agencies to tell me I shouldn't let my baby play with something sharp. When we rely on the liberal nanny to tell us it's safe to cross the street, we don't take responsibility to learn to look both ways to make sure we won't get hit by a bus. On top of that, all those government agencies limit innovation and choice—and cost us a bundle along the way when our taxes go up and prices for products skyrocket.
5. Invention requires hard work and risk taking. In democratic socialism, you radicals create obstacles to both. First, there is no incentive to work hard because there is no profit motive. Second, those few who are still willing to be entrepreneurs run into the brick wall of product safety councils. When a new folding chair is invented, a stakeholder worries about the possibility of fingers getting pinched. The council then creates a slew of new hazard assessment protocols, and entrepreneurs just give up and go home.
6. The radical idea to solicit everyone's input about the safety of products is actually the fundamental premise of free-market capitalism. Price signals let each and every consumer express their needs and concerns about the level of safety they want by voting with their wallets. Unlike in democratic socialism, we achieve this outcome without time-wasting, soul-crushing committee meetings where nothing is ever decided and nothing ever gets made.
7. In free-market capitalism, consumer demand drives markets. People do their own research and decide what products to buy. If they need or want more information, then a market for independent, unbiased product safety information will emerge. From the point of view of suppliers, it is beneficial to make safety information available because it improves their competitiveness. Firms voluntarily invest in the testing to ensure safer products because firms follow the profit motive, and safe products are good for business.
8. When we leave the market alone, we get the level of product safety we want because people don't buy products that hurt them. It's that simple. So we don't need any council or regulations to represent the needs and desires of consumers. Those are already communicated through the choices made every day when we decide what to buy and what not to buy. By ridding society of stifling government interference, everyone benefits. We get innovative products cheaper, faster—and safer, if that's what we want.

# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Livelihood

## BIG PICTURE

When workers own the means of production and use democratic processes to make decisions, it ensures that everyone can earn a decent livelihood.

## POLICY POSITION

Poverty causes suffering and deprivation, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies lead to more poverty because survival in capitalism depends on increasing rates of workplace exploitation and a reserve army of the unemployed.
- ▶ Liberal policies may lessen the theft—barely—but don't fix the underlying problem, and they leave workers with the false belief that this is as good as it gets.

## SOLUTION

Replace minimum wage legislation in capitalism with worker-owned business incubators in democratic socialism to end poverty:

- Support new enterprises to build the economy.
- Generate wealth to alleviate everyone's financial burdens.



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## Livelihood Talking Points: Radical

1. Across industries and in every community, cooperative ownership enables people to earn a decent living. We are the ones who benefit from the fruits of our own labor because we own it together. At the end of the month, after the firm's bills are paid, there is more profit to share fairly among worker-owners. That means we can all earn a decent livelihood, create a better quality of life for ourselves and our families, and give back to our communities.
2. With cooperative ownership, we get more than a paycheck. We get a real say in what goes on at work, from how much we earn to what benefits we get. We decide together how the firm is run and the ways we want our companies to impact our community and the planet. We don't have to worry that when we improve our business with the latest artificial intelligence it will put people's jobs at risk. Our goal is to make life better for ourselves and for our whole society.
3. Conservatives, once again you try to sell us your free-market fantasy of the labor market, but every day in capitalism, private owners steal from their workers. And those low-skilled workers have no choice but to put up with this theft and spend their lives laboring for low pay and no benefits. And you do whatever is necessary to increase the rate of exploitation. You love to point the finger at imaginary "freeloaders" in democratic socialism, but capitalism is a system of freeloaders who live off the sweat of hardworking people.
4. Owners exploit workers because it brings them profit, and when we leave it alone, as conservatives want to do, then those owners have no constraints. When they buy new machines and productivity goes up, workers' wages don't. Then, because of those new machines, owners lay off workers and create a reserve army of the unemployed. While workers scramble to compete for the few jobs that remain, wages are driven down even more. Every way you look at it, the workers are the losers in free-market capitalism.
5. Liberals, you want to be the good guys who fight for a better livelihood for workers by pushing for a higher minimum wage. But the problem isn't how much the hourly wage is; the problem is that the whole system of capitalism is based on private owners exploiting workers. A higher minimum wage won't solve that. Minimum wage may limit the amount owners can steal, but the stealing continues. All you're doing is trying to give us a slightly more palatable way to package the theft.
6. The minimum wage creates a dangerous illusion that all it takes to solve poverty is a few more dollars in workers' paychecks. This keeps us from making the real changes that would eliminate poverty. It keeps workers' bellies filled just enough so that they will go back to work the next day. And in our global economy, firms do an end-run around the minimum wage and move jobs to countries where labor is cheaper. Fair-market capitalism is a contradiction. There's no fairness with workplace exploitation.
7. Worker-owned business incubators make it possible for more worker-owned firms to launch, and they help firms succeed by giving them technical and financial support—loans, mentoring, grants, research on best practices, and so forth. Through cooperative ownership, people enjoy the fruits of their own labor and prosper. Our tax dollars fund the incubators because our whole society benefits when entrepreneurs bring their new innovations to market and when businesses thrive.
8. By supporting more people in forming successfully cooperatively owned enterprises, we raise everyone's standard of living because a portion of the surplus that's generated by every firm pays for everyone's well-being—health care, higher education, transportation, and so forth. Sharing responsibility for these high-cost goods and services establishes the foundation of well-being across the nation: opportunities to prosper and freedom from worry about meeting our material needs.

# Conservative

## Free-Market Capitalism



Livelihood

### BIG PICTURE

Through free-market capitalism and the profit motive, people follow price signals and have incentives to make choices that allow them to prosper.

### POLICY POSITION

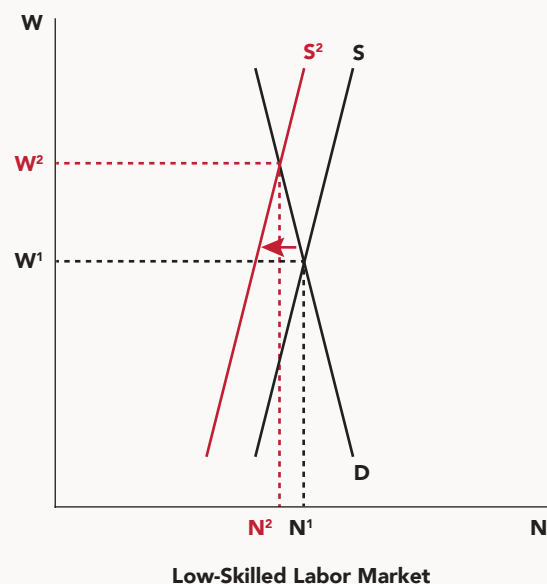
Poverty causes suffering and deprivation, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies make poverty worse by creating higher unemployment, driving up prices, and forcing firms to go under.
- ▶ Radical policies sap motivation to work hard, which means nothing gets produced, and waste tax dollars on enterprises that are doomed to fail.

### SOLUTION

Reject minimum wage legislation and replace it with free-market wages to end poverty:

- People are motivated to move up the ladder.
- Livable wages arise naturally.



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## Livelihood Talking Points: Conservative

1. Poverty solves itself when markets are free from government meddling. When the price signal for low-skilled work is free from interference, those who can do higher-skilled work are motivated to make choices that put them in a position to earn a better livelihood. They finish their education, learn marketable skills, work hard, and apply for better-paying jobs. They work their way up the ladder to prosperity.
2. We'll always need low-skilled workers, and there are people whose skill levels are appropriate for low-skilled jobs. When the price for wages is left alone, the people who weren't appropriate for those jobs leave the market. This is good because they shouldn't have been in that market in the first place. We should let wages adjust naturally to where they should have been all along. Then people who belong in the low-skilled job market can finally earn a decent livelihood.
3. When you see a bird that looks hungry, you feel sorry for it, and you feed it. It seems like you're doing the compassionate thing. But then what happens? The bird becomes dependent on your bird feeder and stops using its own innate abilities to find worms and seeds to feed itself. It becomes impoverished. Liberals, this is exactly what you do when you make low-skilled workers dependent on handouts and policies that supposedly protect them. You demotivate them and in the process leave them stranded in poverty.
4. The minimum wage jacks up employers' costs so firms have to lay off workers or go out of business. Either way, we get more unemployment. Ouch. And now those firms have to raise the prices of their products because they're paying higher wages. Cost of living goes up. Double ouch. So the great idea liberals have to solve poverty leaves people unemployed and paying more for everything. This is what they always do—attempt to solve a problem with government meddling and end up making things worse.
5. We all want to create wealth, but trading private ownership and wage labor for cooperative ownership means that some people coast along and grab a free ride on the backs of diligent, hardworking people. And those hard workers don't want to be suckers, so they eventually stop working hard because why should they break a sweat if no one else is? Radicals, you poison the whole work ethic because in democratic socialism no one is motivated and nothing gets done.
6. Worker-owned business incubators are government-funded committees that use our tax dollars to fund start-ups. Here's the problem with this idea: I won't be dedicated to the success of my cooperatively owned business because it's not my money I'm risking. So when my new enterprise fails because none of us really knows what we're doing, it takes us forever to vote on every decision, and we have no expert at the helm, we'll just go back to the committee and let the community fund our next dead-end idea.
7. Here's why the free market is our only viable solution for people to make a good living. In the low-skilled labor market, the wage isn't set by a government bureaucrat. It's determined by the reality of supply and demand. That's great news because it means everyone who wants a job gets a job at whatever wage naturally emerges. Those who stay in the low-skilled labor market finally can earn a decent wage, while others use it as the first step on the ladder to better opportunities.
8. When we pursue our self-interest in a system of private ownership and unregulated markets, we get the best outcomes. People are motivated to move up from the low-skilled labor market and use their talents and skills to bring the world inventions and innovations that make everyone better off. We get entertainment that moves and engages us, beautiful buildings where we can live and work, and everything else we want. People are guided to make decisions that improve their own well-being and also enrich the whole society.



# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



Livelihood

## BIG PICTURE

When workers earn a decent living, they are able to buy the things they need, and with increased demand, firms hire more workers, so more people thrive.

## POLICY POSITION

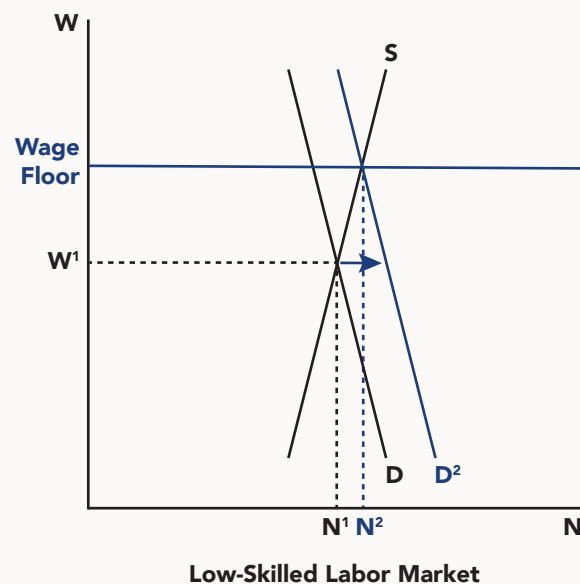
Poverty causes suffering and deprivation, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies squelch entrepreneurial drive and impoverish the whole society, while firms flounder and workers stagnate.
- ▶ Conservative policies exacerbate poverty because working people stay poor and firms go under when people can't buy their products.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen minimum wage legislation to end poverty:

- Raise it to a living wage.
- Boost the whole economy.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Livelihood Talking Points: Liberal

1. Have you ever waited tables at a diner on a Sunday morning? Have you ever mowed lawns and trimmed trees at a resort? Have you ever cleaned motel rooms? Those jobs require hard work, focus, and expertise, but we dismiss them as “low-skilled” and don’t pay those workers a decent wage. Nobody who works full time should be living in poverty. The term *working poor* should be an oxymoron. Low-skilled workers deserve our thanks and should be paid a living wage.
2. Do you want to know how to end poverty? Guarantee all workers a living wage. That will lift millions of people out of poverty. And getting more money to low-income people stimulates the economy because they have so many material needs that they spend the money in their pockets right away. The boost in demand helps business and circles back around to workers when firms expand and start hiring. A living wage means more jobs, and more jobs mean more prosperity for all.
3. Radicals, you want to throw out the very thing that solves poverty, which is fair-market capitalism. Democratic socialism won’t generate wealth, because the entrepreneurs who bring us the new ideas that become tomorrow’s economic drivers have no motivation to spend years tinkering in the garage or toiling in the lab to perfect a new design. With cooperative ownership the rewards of genius, talent, and effort are shared with people who didn’t do all that hard work.
4. The radical policy of worker-owned business incubators has a major flaw. When people with no expertise are handed a voting share of the company, businesses fail. This problem can’t be fixed because in democratic socialism, firms aren’t allowed to hire wage laborers, so workers can’t get experience. Radicals prevent people from gaining the skills that could become the stepping stones to improving their lives and adding value to firms.
5. Conservatives blame the poor for being unmotivated to improve their lives. It’s naïve to think a person can just move into a better-paying job overnight. Have you looked at the price of tuition lately? How will they pay their bills while they’re in school? Most of the working poor have few options, which is why they get stuck in low-wage work. The free-market approach makes the odds worse that they’ll ever be able to work their way up to a decent livelihood.
6. When people are stuck in poverty because they can’t earn a fair wage, the whole economy suffers. Conservatives, you shoot yourselves in the foot by opposing the minimum wage because when people have no money in their pockets, businesses don’t thrive. Firms have to lay off more workers or go belly-up. So then we end up with higher rates of poverty. Once again, your idea to do nothing puts our whole economy at risk.
7. Strengthening minimum wage legislation is the best way to help people rise out of poverty. It’s a lifeline for motivated people who are struggling to earn a decent living and make their lives better. People who work forty hours or more a week at low-skilled jobs should, at the very least, be able afford the basic necessities of life for themselves and their families. By raising the minimum wage to a living wage, this becomes possible. It is the right and fair policy for our country.
8. We end the travesty of the “working poor” by expanding the minimum wage so there are no longer any exceptions—it includes commissioned salespeople, tipped workers, farm workers, and others. This policy is good for individuals, families, and businesses because all can prosper. We get more money into the pockets of low-income people, businesses expand, and people have more opportunities to rise out of poverty. This is how we create the optimal conditions for our whole nation to thrive.

# Conservative

Free-Market Capitalism



Housing

## BIG PICTURE

When the invisible hand of free-market capitalism guides people's choices, we get the housing we want and producers are motivated to supply it.

## POLICY POSITION

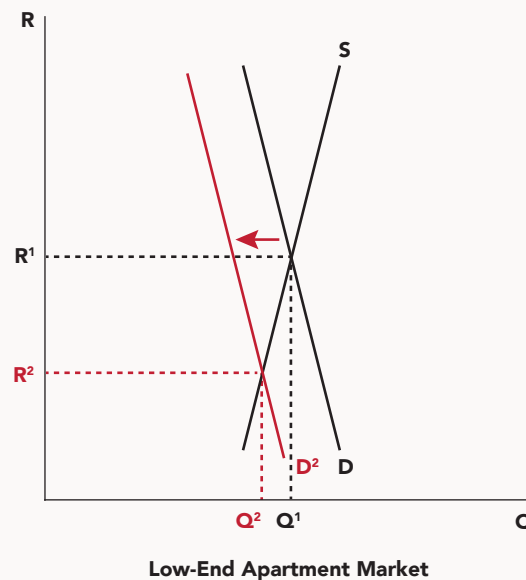
Unaffordable housing leads to homelessness, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies undermine the sanctity of our homes and trade price signals for central planning, which creates a chaos of bad decisions about allocating land for housing.
- ▶ Liberal policies oppress landlords and hurt tenants, creating shortages of affordable housing and no incentives to keep the few available in good repair.

## SOLUTION

Reject rent control laws and replace them with free-market rent signals to ensure affordable housing for all:

- People optimize their circumstances.
- Private philanthropy serves as the safety net.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Housing Talking Points: Conservative

1. When Gotham City is in trouble, the commissioner calls for Batman by beaming a signal into the sky. Today, there are areas of the country that are frantically signaling that they need people to move there, and their signal is price. When housing is unaffordable in one area, people move to a more affordable area. This strategy is good for the nation. This is how we attract the doctors, the business people, and the teachers to the communities that need them the most.
2. In our country, we must support visionary entrepreneurship. When it comes to housing, it's the developers and investors who take the risks to supply it, and they are the ones who should reap the well-earned rewards. We would never want to discourage anyone from being in the business of providing us with everything that brings us a good life. This is what guarantees milk in the grocery store, an airline that is willing to fly you across the country, and a roof over your head.
3. Radicals, your plan of resident-owned communities sounds like a nightmare of mutual cooperative destruction. I don't want to live in a place where everyone is in my business and there are constant meetings to regulate whether people are allowed to cook fish because it stinks up the hallways. I work my butt off to have a roof over my head, and my home is my castle. Your plan would turn my sanctuary into a nightmare of nosy neighbors, endless bickering, and no one taking responsibility for basic maintenance.
4. Radicals, no community land trust can possibly plan for what the best use of that land should be. There are too many moving parts. It's the profit motive and price signals that move resources to their optimal use so that we get the housing we need. Disrupting that delicate balance by pulling land out of the private market means we'll end up with too much or too little housing relative to the jobs available, to the population, or to the available drinking water.
5. Liberals, rent control isn't fair to owners. They're the ones who take the risks and who should reap the well-earned rewards for providing housing. And your policies of public housing and Section 8 are not the solutions. Those government programs create more homelessness. They send a signal to people to expect free or heavily subsidized housing. Instead of taking action to put a roof over their heads, people continue to live out of their cars or languish in shelters waiting for their handout.
6. Rent control laws cause shortages of affordable housing, which leads to more homelessness. If you lower the price for something, of course more demanders want it, and of course fewer suppliers provide it. Investors become unwilling to be landlords, so developers don't build low-cost housing. And current landlords have no motivation to keep their properties in good repair, so tenants who somehow manage to find an affordable home can thank a liberal for the leaky faucets, peeling paint, and broken screens.
7. With unfettered rent signals, developers build the variety of affordable housing that people want because there is a market for it, and investors are willing to become landlords because it's profitable to do so. Then, people optimize their circumstances by moving to the places that give them the best combination of a high-paying job and affordable housing. The whole country is better off in free-market capitalism because communities attract the workforces they need and there are homes for all.
8. For those who fall through the cracks, philanthropy provides a safety net. Individuals participate because it's in our nature to take care of our friends, families, and communities. Firms participate because it enhances their reputation where they do business. And religious groups and nonprofit organizations participate because it's their mission to care for others. When we allow price signals to direct housing choices, and combine that with private philanthropy, everyone who wants housing can have it.

# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Housing

### BIG PICTURE

When housing is cooperatively owned, we get a wide variety of affordable and desirable options, and individuals have a vote and a voice in their living situations.

### POLICY POSITION

Unaffordable housing leads to homelessness, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies, whether tax credits, vouchers, or public housing, can't ever be sustainable solutions because they don't challenge the core problems of private ownership and the drive for profit.
- ▶ Conservative policies leave people in the lurch because they can't all simply move when private owners jack up the rent, plus landlords are forced to maximize rents and minimize upkeep to turn a profit.

### SOLUTION

Replace rent control laws in capitalism with resident-owned cooperatives in democratic socialism to ensure affordable housing for all:

- A home is a basic human right.
- People choose the type of housing they want.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Housing Talking Points: Radical

1. In democratic socialism cooperative ownership of housing gives us hands-on control over where we live. Co-owners make decisions together using a democratic process of one person, one vote. That means you can feel secure knowing your monthly fees won't just go up arbitrarily and things that need to be repaired will actually get fixed. And when bad luck strikes—like a plumbing problem or a tornado—co-owners come together and take care of it.
2. Housing is not a luxury; it's a necessity for our survival. Communities make it a priority to ensure there are affordable options for people at every stage of their lives. When housing is an investment in people and not an investment for profit, there are plenty of resources in our communities to afford everything we need to produce decent and sustainable options. No one has to live in fear of being homeless. People have the housing they need and the whole society benefits.
3. Liberals, rent control is not a solution. Even if there were rent control laws across the whole nation, capitalism feeds on profit, so by making housing less profitable for landlords, you discourage them from providing housing. That leads to more homelessness. Liberals, your efforts are futile. You're trying to fix what can't be fixed: the systemic failure of capitalism. It's a sinking ship that leaves millions without a roof over their heads, and millions more waiting in dread to join them.
4. Liberals, first you came up with public housing to replace slums—and then your housing projects turned into slums. Section 8 housing isn't much better, so you introduced the voucher system. Now people wait for years just to get on the five-year waiting list! Low-Income Housing Tax Credits are a scam to line the pockets of developers and investors, so please don't pretend it's bringing us the affordable housing we need. Your housing policies fail because residents have no ownership stake, voice, or vote.
5. Conservatives, the American Dream in free-market capitalism means that millions of hardworking people toil away, day and night, and still have to worry about keeping a roof over their heads. Your solution is a bad joke. People who are unable to find affordable housing can't just move themselves and their families to another city. Even if it were possible, the disruption to everyone's lives and their social networks and communities would be devastating. Your plan would create masses of domestic migrants.
6. Conservatives think price signals will magically save the day and cure us of homelessness. They won't. In free-market capitalism landlords will always raise rents as high as they can get away with, and they maximize their profit by doing the minimum upkeep and repairs. Even if they don't want to evict tenants who can't pay or turn their affordable housing into profitable vacation rentals, they will. In capitalism, a landlord who isn't doing that is a landlord who doesn't survive.
7. People must have homes to succeed in life. That's why we all contribute to ensure that housing is a basic right. For those who need help beyond the social safeguards already provided in democratic socialism, government-assisted ROCs ensure that they have adequate, affordable housing. Also, housing councils are made up of stakeholders in local areas. They use community land trusts to plan the best uses of land so that society can fulfill its guarantee of housing for all—now and into the future.
8. With resident-owned communities, we get a wide range of affordable housing choices. You like being around other people? Choose co-housing, where everyone shares meals and responsibilities, or a co-op apartment, where neighbors make decisions together, or a resident-owned mobile home park. You'd rather do your own thing? Choose a single-family home. The point is that no one is making a profit off your need to put a roof over your head, and that's how we solve the problem of the lack of affordable housing.

# Liberal

## Fair-Market Capitalism



Housing

## BIG PICTURE

Liberal government programs and policies create a stable supply of affordable housing so that people can keep a roof over their heads.

## POLICY POSITION

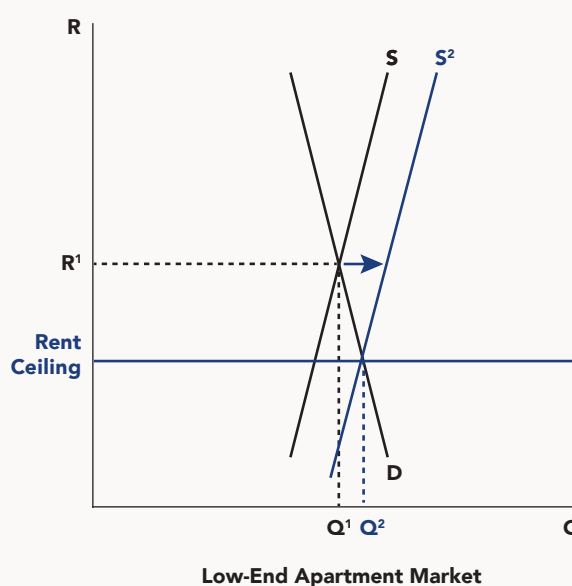
Unaffordable housing leads to homelessness, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies lead to even more homelessness because landlords can and do take advantage of tenants' economic vulnerability.
- ▶ Radical policies lead to cronyism, corruption, shoddy construction—if buildings even go up at all—and a nightmare of endless meetings.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen rent control laws to ensure affordable housing for all:

- Expand incentives for landlords to keep them in the game.
- Taxpayers save billions when homelessness ends.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Housing Talking Points: Liberal

1. A home isn't a luxury—it's a basic necessity for every human being. It's the foundation for well-being—for decent nutrition, good hygiene, a good night's rest, and personal safety. No matter whether it's a tiny attic apartment or a palace, home is our personal sanctuary. Homelessness derails people's lives, and we all miss out on the contributions they could be making if they weren't so dragged down with the business of daily survival.
2. It's in everyone's self-interest to ensure that each of us can afford a decent place to live. Why? Because homelessness traps people in poverty, which ultimately ends up draining our country's resources. We're fortunate to have a government that does the right thing by partnering with private industry to create more affordable public housing and affordable private housing options. Instead of turning our backs on the homeless, we build a thriving economy and stronger society.
3. Conservatives, relocating is expensive, and these are poor people, so telling low-income people to pack up and move to a new city is not a practical solution. And even if they managed to move, without rent control, they'll just be at the mercy of a new landlord who will gouge them with impunity. You're the first to preach about hard work and people needing to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. But then you turn around and want to take away their boots.
4. Conservatives, you have faith in the invisible hand to make all things right, but our higher moral value as a society is to care for one another. When it comes to a product that is a basic necessity, such as housing, the profit motive needs to be tempered with compassion and reined in. There are no real substitutes for affordable housing—not the car, not the park bench, not the temporary shelter. And private philanthropy won't house everyone, while doing nothing gets us nothing—except more homelessness.
5. Radicals, without the profit motive, your cooperative housing never gets built because no one bothers to show up at the work site. It's naïve to think every project is motivated by altruism. Those builders are not always building housing for only their own family and friends. But let's say they do miraculously show up at the building site. Those worker-owners get paid the same whether they do a good job or a bad job, so your housing is guaranteed to be poorly made.
6. Radicals, community land trusts are rife with potential for cronyism and corruption. There is a limited amount of land on which housing can be built, so which group of wannabe cooperative owners gets the lease from the housing councils? It is the group that knows the most people who show up to the meeting, has the most friends, knows the stakeholders on the committee, and so forth. That is the end of democracy and the opening for totalitarianism to creep in.
7. Rent control should be expanded to more areas of the country where affordable housing is desperately needed. It makes decent housing available to low-income people and also helps landlords, because they can rely on a steady income stream and low turnover of their tenants. Let's expand the role of government by giving landlords more options and more incentives to invest in affordable housing—property tax breaks, funds for repairs, and so forth. This is fair, and it also creates buy-in from owners.
8. There is not one state in the union that doesn't struggle with a lack of sufficient affordable housing. Getting people into affordable homes saves our nation billions in programs that address the fallout from homelessness—hunger, crime, drug addiction, and disease. When the government partners with the private sector, we get the affordable housing we need. The government has the power to use programs and regulations to fix the problem. When we can fix a problem, we *should*.



# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



Income  
Distribution

## BIG PICTURE

Through government programs that promote fairness, we level the playing field and give everyone an equal opportunity to succeed and contribute to society.

## POLICY POSITION

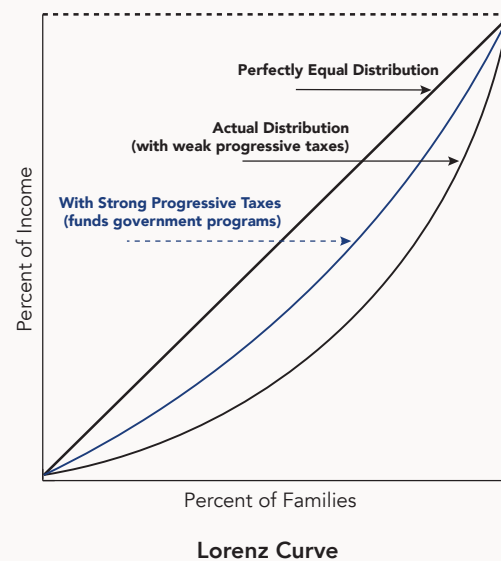
Income inequality can cause social conflict, but...

- ▶ Conservative policies unfairly blame the poor and trap them in a cycle of poverty while making the rich even wealthier, which leads to extreme levels of income inequality.
- ▶ Radical policies undermine everyone's motivation to work hard, penalize entrepreneurs, and lead to a society where all are equally impoverished.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen progressive taxes that fund government programs to ensure that income rewards people fairly:

- Expand government programs to create more equal opportunities.
- Those who benefit the most pay it forward.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Income Distribution Talking Points: Liberal

1. In our society, some people have a head start in life while others are behind before the race even gets going. This is a big problem because winning and losing are a matter of life and death. Winners get a comfortable existence with food, a home, and health care. Losers get debt, hunger, and shorter life expectancies. So the right thing to do is to make the race fair by ensuring that everyone starts out with equal opportunities so we can all run our best race.
2. I gladly pay my taxes when they are used to fund government programs that create equal opportunities. I'm talking about childhood education, food aid, housing assistance, and Medicaid. It benefits me when every child has a chance to grow up to be the next great leader, inventor, or teacher. It benefits me when adults can get essential job training, financial aid for higher education, addiction treatment, and other assistance. The more opportunities there are for all, the better off society is as a whole.
3. Conservatives, government programs don't make people lazy. A hand up is not a handout. Handouts are being born with a trust fund and an automatic acceptance letter to the best private schools. That makes people lazy. You say the rich are motivated by the promise of wealth, while the poor are motivated by hardship. The last time I looked, we're all human beings with the same motivations. This hypocrisy is your elaborate justification for making the rich even richer and the poor even poorer.
4. This is the land of the free, not the land of the free-for-all, where the wealthiest can grab up all the riches and refuse to pay their fair share. Contrary to what conservatives say, the rich don't deserve special treatment in the form of lower taxes. They didn't succeed just through their hard work. The idea that the rich are persecuted in this country when we require them to pay their fair share is what's keeping us from closing the widening income gap.
5. Radicals, you are wrong on so many levels it's hard to know where to start. First, giving everyone a universal basic income would be a total disaster. When you start handing out UBI checks, the scheme will backfire because no one will bother to show up for work anymore. A system of freebies means nothing will get made. You say the UBI can be funded through progressive taxes, but with what tax base? In your unproductive and lethargic economy, there isn't any.
6. Radicals want to institute a maximum wage cap in democratic socialism to prevent society's innovators and leaders from profiting off their skills and talents. It's as if radicals intentionally want freeloaders to leech off the few people in a worker-owned firm who might actually care about making a profit. This policy kills the wealth-potential of the economy. Anyone who has a great idea, or is interested in working hard and being an entrepreneur will flee democratic socialism for capitalist countries, where effort is rewarded.
7. We close the income gap by using progressive taxes to fund government assistance programs that give people the opportunities they need to rise. We fund Head Start to give every child access to preschool. We fund Medicaid to give everyone access to health care. We provide food assistance so no one goes hungry, and housing assistance to keep people off the streets. This just makes good sense, because people are able to contribute their best to society when their basic material needs are met.
8. It's right and fair for the rich to pay more because they often start out in life with advantages, and they benefit the most from the things everyone's taxes fund—the nation's infrastructure, our justice system, beneficial international trade deals, copyrights and patents, and more. We redistribute wealth in our country from the richest to the poorest so we can open doors for more people to succeed. This is how we flatten the income gap and harness the power of incentives in capitalism, all while keeping the system fair.

# Conservative

Free-Market Capitalism



Income Distribution

## BIG PICTURE

People earn what they deserve in free-market capitalism because we are all free to make the choices that bring us the income we desire.

## POLICY POSITION

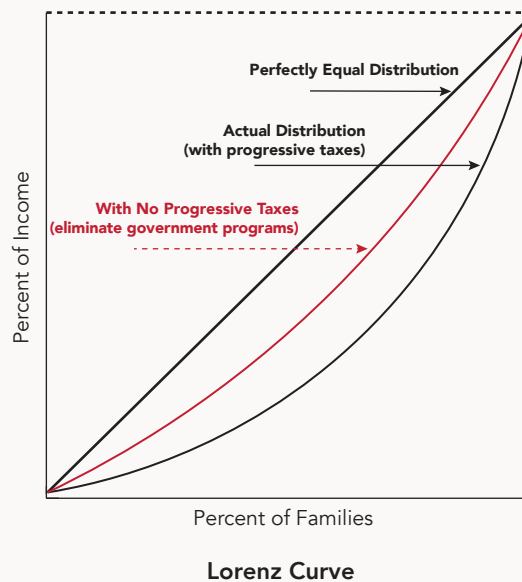
Income inequality can cause social conflict, but...

- ▶ Radical policies result in a toxic combination of resentment, entitlement, demotivation, and police-state oppression, all to ensure equal starvation.
- ▶ Liberal policies punish high earners and kill incentives, while government handouts create dependency and keep the lowest earners permanently stuck.

## SOLUTION

Reject progressive taxes and replace them with flat consumption taxes to ensure that income rewards people fairly:

- Individual hard work pays off and lifts society.
- Charitable giving provides opportunities to rise.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Income Distribution Talking Points: **Conservative**

1. Competition is meant to inspire us to give it our all. People with the highest incomes achieved their success by putting in the hard work and effort. They should never have to apologize for that. They should be honored for achieving excellence in their chosen areas. The beauty of competition in a free-market environment is that everyone brings their A game because the rewards are fair, so they play to win. The whole society benefits when everyone runs their best race.
2. Whether you were born in a mansion or in public housing doesn't make competition unfair. Maybe the fact that you were born rich actually keeps you from doing your best because everything is handed to you on a silver platter. Maybe being born into poverty is an advantage because it motivates you to make the most of your opportunities. We all have the ability to follow wage signals, strive to reach our goals, and achieve the success we choose.
3. Radicals, your UBI, funded through progressive taxes is an assault on the American Dream. It breeds resentment and entitlement. You end up with class warfare when you force the people in the top quintile to cede their hard-earned fortunes to support people who don't lift a finger to work. With resentment on one side and entitlement on the other, the government has to step in as the totalitarian enforcer. Then we won't be worrying about the income gap—we'll be worrying about saving our democracy.
4. Entrepreneurs should be rewarded for their ingenuity and hard work. Instead, radicals want to impose a maximum wage cap to flatten income inequality. But what it really flattens is everyone's ambition to work hard and innovate. Putting a ceiling on income ruins the economy because the great leaders and thinkers we need to drive the economy forward don't have the right wage signal, so they don't choose those jobs. When your top players are benched, it hurts the whole society.
5. Liberals, consider that smart phone in your pocket. It does amazing things. It's a phone, it's a camera, it's a computer, and it's made your life better in countless ways. Our best interest is to make sure that the inventors, innovators, and producers are rewarded because they bring us the things that make our lives better. Rewards motivate them to keep bringing us transformative new products. But instead of rewarding the successful, you punish them with demotivating high taxes.
6. Under the liberal plan, the poor are in a double bind. If they try to work their way out of poverty, they lose their government handouts. They can't afford to take an entry-level job that might turn into a career because they would make just enough to disqualify them from receiving assistance but not enough to cover their basic material needs. Instead of giving low-income people a step up the ladder, liberal programs keep the poor forever stuck on the bottom rung.
7. Flat consumption taxes should replace progressive income taxes to ensure unfettered distribution of income. When we stop taxing people on their income, they have an incentive to work hard and prosper. We motivate entrepreneurs to start businesses and encourage innovation, which improves life for everyone. We can easily fund the necessary roles of government through flat consumption taxes, and not only will more people work hard, but income will be distributed more equitably.
8. For those in society who struggle to move up, or who fall through the cracks, free-market solutions create the opportunities they need to get ahead. By replacing government meddling with the right incentives, we no longer have a dangerously wide income gap. Everyone at every income level is highly motivated and everyone has the opportunity to succeed. For those few who might still need help, friends and family, religious organizations, crowdfunding, and corporate philanthropy give them a hand.

# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Income  
Distribution

## BIG PICTURE

When we value everyone's contributions, everyone is able to prosper and enjoy their fair share of the abundance we all create together.

## POLICY POSITION

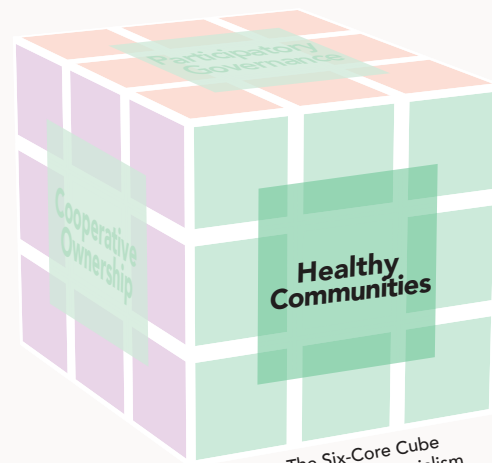
Income inequality can cause social conflict, but...

- ▶ Liberal policies perpetuate the dangerous notion that a few government programs funded by taxes on the wealthy can rectify the fundamental injustice perpetrated by capitalism.
- ▶ Conservative policies are built on bald-faced lies that the mega rich earn their income fairly, that anyone can be rich, and that we're all better off when the rich get richer.

## SOLUTION

Replace progressive taxes in capitalism with a universal basic income and a maximum wage cap in democratic socialism to ensure that income rewards people fairly:

- Everyone gets what they need and deserve.
- The wage gap flattens.



The Six-Core Cube  
of Democratic Socialism

- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
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## Income Distribution Talking Points: Radical

1. In democratic socialism, the race is fair from the get-go. We acknowledge that we're all in this together; your success benefits me, and mine benefits you. Cooperation brings out the best in humanity because when we own it together, we make decisions democratically about how to share the rewards fairly. Never losing sight of the fact that we share our workplaces, our local communities, and our planet, we make decisions that value everyone's well-being and the well-being of the world.
2. The golden rule prevails in democratic socialism. We want to have our basic needs met, so we make sure everyone has their basic needs met. We want to have a say in what we earn, so we make sure all co-owners have a say about the pay scale in their workplaces. We acknowledge others with words, but also with incomes that are the fair reward for their contributions. This predistribution of income is the foundation of our economic well-being.
3. Liberals, your progressive income tax can't bring equitable income distribution because capitalism is set up to have only a few winners. No matter how many school lunch programs and job training programs you fund, this fact remains true. A few people might claw their way to the top of the income ladder, but that doesn't solve the systemic problem of income inequality. You've changed a player or two on the Forbes 500 list, but you haven't changed the game.
4. Liberal programs fill people's bellies and take a smidgen of their desperation away, but then make them jump through so many hoops to get those benefits that they have no energy left to protest the rotten system that is causing them to starve in the first place. You might sound virtuous when you say the rich should pay more, but what you're not admitting is that the obscene wealth of the rich was made at the expense of the poor.
5. Conservatives, you peddle a dangerous lie when you say the people at the top deserve their riches because they made their money through their own hard work and by pulling themselves up by their bootstraps. Owners get rich off the backs of their workers, and then they invest their money in other firms that exploit their workers, making themselves even richer. So when you say the wealthy deserve their rewards, you are in effect saying that we should applaud them for stealing.
6. Flat consumption taxes are regressive. Here go conservatives, once more privileging the rich, hurting the poorest, and institutionalizing the idea that the rich have no responsibility to pay back what they owe to society. They claim that helping the rich get richer is the road to a healthy economy because it motivates everyone to work hard. There's nothing remotely healthy about a society where the richest control nearly all the wealth in our nation and the 99 percent struggle to get by.
7. When every adult is guaranteed a monthly UBI that can be used in any way they choose, we raise the income levels of the lower earners proportionately higher than the higher earners, which narrows the income gap. People are free to contribute their talents and gifts to society, including pursuing important occupations that aren't generally lucrative, such as the arts and family caregiving. The net effect is a higher standard of living, more people participating in growing the economy, and a society with less income disparity.
8. Income is redistributed fairly to start with because we have worker-ownership in democratic socialism. Economic justice is baked into the system. Dangerous income disparity is further prevented through maximum wage cap legislation. It applies across the nation, setting a percentage limit on how high a salary can be relative to the lowest salary in a firm. This ensures that the income gap will never swell to dangerous levels that could topple our society.

# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



### The Environment

## BIG PICTURE

We ensure that the Earth is protected for us and for future generations through investment, planning, and social commitments that preserve and replenish our natural resources.

## POLICY POSITION

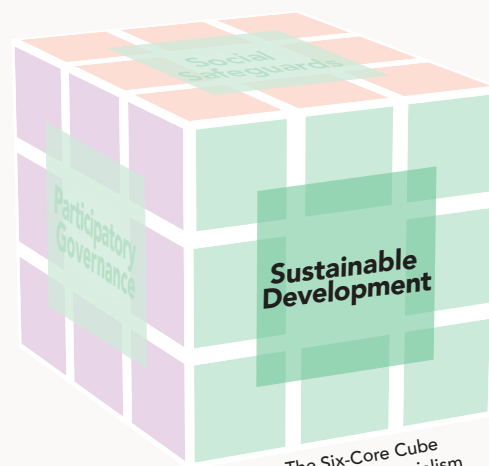
Polluted air, water, and land can be dangerous, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies are too little, too late, too profit-driven, and too top-down to save the planet.
- ▶ Conservative policies sell off our shared natural resources to the highest bidder and trade the well-being of the future for short-term profits.

## SOLUTION

Replace command and control regulation in capitalism with the Green New Deal in democratic socialism to ensure breathable air, drinkable water, and habitable land:

- Stewardship councils determine pollution standards.
- We pay it forward by protecting the Earth for the future.



The Six-Core Cube  
of Democratic Socialism

- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## The Environment Talking Points: Radical

1. In democratic socialism, worker-owned firms make decisions not just for short-term gains but also with an eye on long-term consequences. They won't dump pollution into the river or overuse resources simply because it's easy and convenient to do so. When natural resources are owned by the whole community, there is a pressure for good to curb pollution and only produce what society wants and needs. After all, worker-owners also live in the communities where they produce, so it benefits them, too.
2. When we all share ownership, we each have an equal stake in keeping the environment viable and thriving. With participatory governance, environmental advocates, firms, consumers and others have a seat at the table. Because everyone in society is entitled to an equal share of the community's natural resources, we maintain a wise balance between the natural world and the built world and between our needs today and the needs of those in years to come.
3. Liberals, command and control regulation doesn't work because no matter what laws you pass, firms in capitalism are forced to do whatever is necessary to generate more profit. A new regulation requires firms to put filters on smokestacks? A massive campaign donation goes into a politician's pocket, and suddenly the pollution standards are rewritten, and the firm is exempt from the new regulation. In the meantime, the workers and their families die of lung cancer and heart disease caused by the pollution.
4. Liberals supplement their big idea of command and control with carbon pricing. It's nothing more than a program to let firms pay more to pollute more. It's not a real solution. It barely reduces carbon emissions. In every way, liberal policies fail us, and they fail the Earth. After fifty years of doing it their way, we are now standing an inch away from ecological disaster. Continuing with their feeble policies will undoubtedly send us over the edge.
5. Conservatives, your plan of expanding privatization of natural resources trades our future well-being for a few more dollars in your pocket today. Private firms mine ore and leave behind toxic waste that will last for generations. Their logging decimates old-growth forests, while their fracking and drilling pollute our groundwater. While private owners walk away and look for the next place to set up shop, society pays the price with public health crises and higher taxes to clean up the mess they leave behind.
6. Our planet's ability to support life is threatened by global climate change, but conservatives respond with free-market pollution permits and revenue-neutral carbon taxes, both of which give a profit-motive to the firm, but with no real consequences if they don't participate. The result is that the fossil fuel industries are still thriving, carbon emissions are barely reduced, and conservatives congratulate themselves on finding a new way to make a profit while the house is on fire.
7. In democratic socialism, we have good jobs, a high standard of living, material well-being, prosperous communities, and economic justice. And we don't have to compromise the integrity of the environment. We manage the commons through stewardship councils made up of experts and stakeholders that commission rigorous, data-driven analyses to determine the highest level of pollution abatement that guarantees ecological resilience. By shepherding our resources wisely, we have a healthy environment.
8. The Green New Deal establishes realistic and attainable goals for net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, makes long-term investments in clean energy and infrastructure, and supports sustainable farming and manufacturing. We make a social commitment to tread as lightly as possible on the Earth and make every decision with an awareness that past generations left us a clean environment so that we can thrive today, and we are responsible for paying it forward and leaving those who come after us a healthy planet.



# Liberal

## Fair-Market Capitalism



The Environment

## BIG PICTURE

We use the power of our government to establish and enforce environmental standards to ensure that our natural resources are protected today and far into the future.

## POLICY POSITION

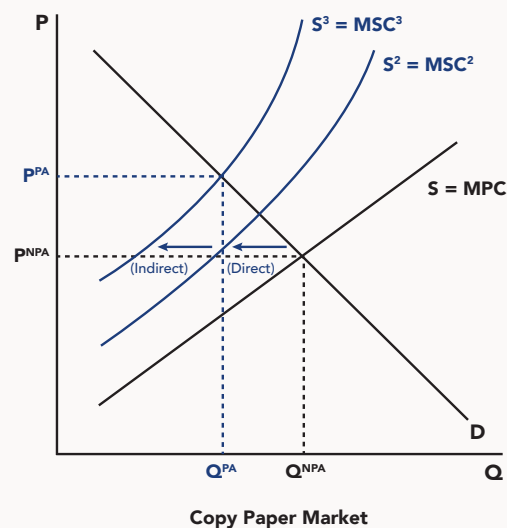
Polluted air, water, and land can be dangerous, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies allow firms to buy the rights to pollute from private owners, ignore the downstream effects of their production, and pose a dire threat to our entire planet.
- ▶ Radical policies lead to an impoverished society that destroys its natural resources while nonhierarchical stewardship councils are incapable of making any decisions about pollution abatement.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen command and control regulation supplemented with carbon pricing to ensure breathable air, drinkable water, and habitable land:

- Expand environmental protections and back them up with strict penalties.
- Use carbon pricing as an additional deterrent.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## The Environment Talking Points: Liberal

1. We all share this planet, and we need to consider the consequences of our actions on others. Pollution and climate change threaten our way of life, but no one person or firm can solve this perilous situation. Luckily, we have a government that can make sure everyone does their fair share to protect the environment. We each contribute a few tax dollars to support environmental agencies composed of experts, scientists, and policymakers. They work for us to protect the commons for everyone's benefit.
2. Government is the impartial player that makes sure everyone participates equitably to keep our natural resources ecologically resilient. It guides firms to reduce harmful emissions and clean up pollutants. Using fair-market capitalism, we give firms the right incentives to pollute less and clean up more. Because all the firms have to do it, no one company or industry bears an unreasonable burden. They can all remain competitive.
3. You conservatives think extending private property rights will solve all our environmental problems. What happens when you privatize our national lands? A few rich buyers make a quick buck by plundering our nation's precious natural resources, and then they turn around and sell the rights to other firms to despoil them further. We have more harmful drilling for oil, fracking for natural gas, and mining for coal because it's profitable. In the end, your grand plan equals more destruction of the Earth.
4. Carbon pricing and cap and trade should be supplements to strong environmental policies, not the only fix conservatives bring to the table. Their free-market ideas boil down to letting firms pay to pollute, whether it's paying a private owner, paying a revenue-neutral carbon tax, or buying pollution permits in the open market. Under their plan, we'll have no revenue to invest in the next leap forward in green energy, and we'll abandon communities that struggle the most from pollution's harmful effects.
5. Radicals, your society descends into poverty because there's no profit incentive in democratic socialism, and therefore there is no motivation for anyone to produce anything. People who are poor become desperate and end up decimating their natural resources to stay alive. We all want to live in a country that has fresh air, pure water, and fertile land. We heal the planet with a scalpel of green capitalism, instead of bludgeoning it to death with the sledgehammer of your socialist Green New Deal.
6. Without dispassionate cost-benefit analyses, radicals can't make objective decisions about the environment. You will spend years trying to assess every possible impact of the downstream-of-the-downstream-of-the-downstream effects of pollution. Decisions will be held up in committee, and firms won't get a green light to move forward with production. Then people will be deprived of the goods and services they need, including the essential service of pollution abatement.
7. Command and control regulations use government to enforce compliance and impose sanctions on violators. Regulatory agencies gather the scientific data to determine best practices for pollution abatement. Because they work for us and not for any individual, firm, or industry, they make the best decisions about how to address local pollution and global climate change. The government's investment in new technologies brings down the costs of pollution abatement so we can achieve ecological resilience.
8. As a supplement to command and control regulations, we use carbon taxes and cap and trade to make it profitable for firms to cut carbon emissions. Then government invests the revenue generated from those programs to develop clean energy alternatives and help the communities most affected by pollution. With fair-market capitalism, the helpful hand of government, coupled with the power of the profit motive, saves our planet.

# Conservative

Free-Market Capitalism



The Environment

## BIG PICTURE

We can have the clean environment we all want and need because price signals in a free-market system give firms and individuals the right incentives to innovate and adapt.

## POLICY POSITION

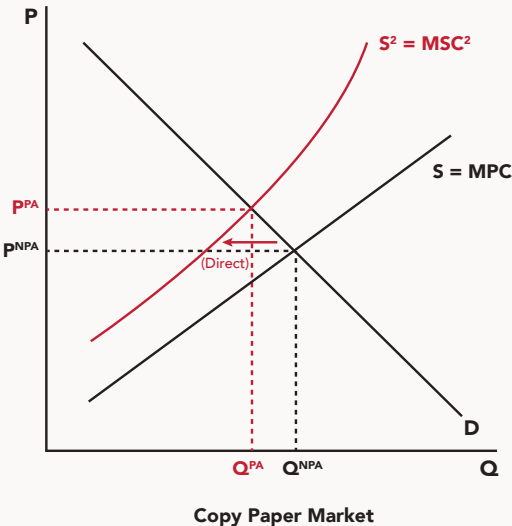
Polluted air, water, and land can be dangerous, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies lead production to grind to a halt, create a tragedy of the commons on an epic scale, and drain all hope of ever achieving a clean environment.
- ▶ Liberal policies are expensive, inefficient, and stifle innovation, and they don't bring us a clean environment.

## SOLUTION

Reject command and control regulation and replace it with expanded private property rights, revenue-neutral carbon taxes, and free-market cap and trade to ensure breathable air, drinkable water, and habitable land:

- The profit motive protects our natural resources.
- We get a clean environment and the products we most desire.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## The Environment Talking Points: **Conservative**

1. Every business wants to make a profit. When we make pollution abatement profitable, firms develop innovative ways to do it. It's in their self-interest to switch to compostable packaging, manufacture lower-emissions cars, invest in renewable energy, and invent more sophisticated scrubbers and filters. We don't need government to impose rules and regulations. We just ride the horse in the direction it's already going and get to a healthy planet faster and cheaper, with the eager cooperation of the private sector.
2. We live in a complex world with complex wants and needs. Of course, as a society we want to continue to make things, but we also want a clean environment. We can have both when we recognize that carrots are much more effective than sticks to motivate firms to change their behavior. They stop cutting corners and hoping they won't get caught cheating. Instead, they develop the best methods for pollution abatement because the bottom line is rewarded by doing so.
3. Radicals, you are hypocrites. While you're busy trash-talking the drive for profit, you use your cell phone to post memes on your social media that blame capitalism for climate change while you jump in your electric car and drive to a protest against a new copper mine. Yet you conveniently ignore the fact that your cell phone, your car, and the copper wiring and, most important, the fresh air you breathe you is the result of the drive for profit. Capitalism isn't the villain; it's the solution.
4. I suppose radicals are right in saying that their Green New Deal will achieve net-zero carbon emissions, but that's only because no factories will operate when ownership is forced to be cooperative. There is a drab, gray world—not a green one. And when everything becomes "the commons" because they outlaw private ownership, tragedy ensues. With policies of democratic socialism, we forfeit our opportunities to clean up the environment or respond to the threat of global climate change.
5. Liberals, your command and control regulations are to blame for the sad state of our environment today. Because businesses have no buy-in to your ideas, they cut corners or cheat, and you handcuff them to doing it your way, which stifles their innovation. You love to go on about the so-called public-private partnership as if it's a consensual relationship, but it's not. An equal partnership wouldn't need to threaten fines and shutdowns to force compliance.
6. Carbon pricing would be a sensible market-based solution except that liberals turn it into a cash cow to fund even more big government. Yes, we want green energy and help for people affected by pollution, but we won't see any progress on pollution abatement and moving into next-generation clean technologies when liberals plop a mountain of regulations in our path. Liberals take us to the brink of environmental collapse and keep us mired in pollution while we watch the world's thermometer inexorably rise.
7. When we make pollution abatement good for the bottom line, we will have the clean environment we want and need. That's why private ownership works. The profit motive guides owners to maintain the appropriate level of cleanup and prevention. When a private party is willing to pay for even higher levels of pollution abatement, the owner of that resource will do it to make more profit. Freely determined price signals give us ecological resilience both locally and globally—if that is what people want.
8. Global climate change is a real and present threat to all life on the planet. Carbon pricing harnesses the profit motive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, whether it's a revenue-neutral carbon tax or a free market in pollution permits. Free-market capitalism spurs innovation because it motivates the private sector to come up with new advances in green energy and new technology. Our beautiful planet needs our protection, and we need its bounties to survive. Conservative policy inspires human ingenuity to save the Earth.

# Conservative

## Free-Market Capitalism



Health  
Care

## BIG PICTURE

We get the best choices, the highest efficiency, the most cutting-edge innovations, and the lowest prices for health care when we let the market be guided by the invisible hand of price signals.

## POLICY POSITION

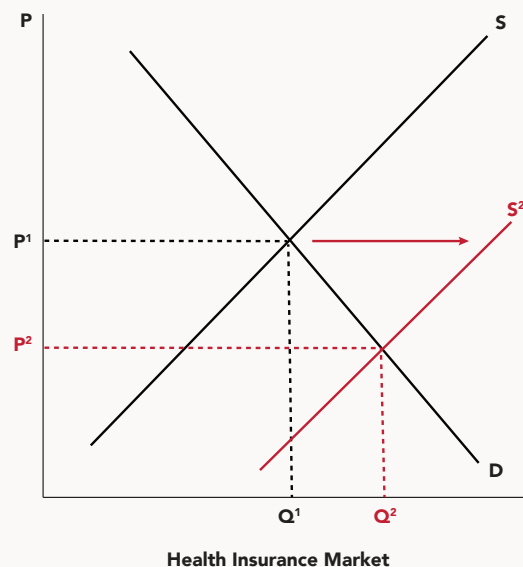
There is lack of access to high-quality health care, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies narrow choices, raise prices and taxes, lower quality, and interfere with our most personal decisions about our health care.
- ▶ Radical policies stifle innovation, kill competition, and clear a path for tyranny by giving government control over who will and won't get medical care.

## SOLUTION

Reject a regulated health-care system and government programs and replace them with private health insurance to ensure health and well-being for all:

- We get more choices, lower prices, and better outcomes.
- Private philanthropy steps in as a safety net.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
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  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Health Care Talking Points: Conservative

1. There's an easy-to-swallow prescription for fixing health care: we tell government to stop interfering, and the system self-heals. We can count on the profit motive to deliver the most advanced medicine, biotech, and medical research on the planet. Free-market competition means only the best and the brightest doctors and nurses rise to the top, so we have the most skilled surgeons, the most talented diagnosticians, and the best caregivers. Ultimately, that's what delivers the best possible health outcomes for all of us.
2. Self-regulation works to deliver the best possible health care because if people are unhappy with a company's policies, prices, or practices, they vote with their wallets and move to another firm. By eliminating government interference and harnessing the profit interest of firms in free-market capitalism, our health-care system is cured. We get the lowest prices for health insurance. This throws open the door for millions more people who want and need it. Now they, too, can benefit from our world-class medicine and state-of-the-art health care.
3. Going to the doctor, having a test done, taking a medication, being fed in a nursing home—these are deeply private experiences that should be between you and your health-care provider. But you liberals invite the government into the treatment room. You give it power over our most personal decisions, including whether a dying person can try a life-saving drug. That's absurd, but you make absurdity the norm in our health-care system.
4. The government should not be in the business of providing health care. Liberals created a system that bleeds us dry with high taxes and delivers clunky government programs that provide mediocre health care. In the meantime, firms can't operate profitably, families are buried in medical debt, providers can't deliver the best care, and insurance companies are forced to keep raising premiums and deny treatments that could help people. Liberal policies condemn us to death by a thousand cuts.
5. Radicals, when everything, including health care, is handed out for free, there is no motivation to work. When people don't work, they don't generate any revenue, so there is nothing to tax. Therefore, your universal health-care system is a nonstarter. But even if it could get off the ground, without a reward incentive there won't be any new advances in medicine. No one will pursue medicine as a career without a profit incentive, so get ready for substandard health care and public health crises.
6. Picture the misery of waiting for hours or even days to get approval to have a broken arm set. In a single-payer system, radicals, waiting is your only option. When you're finally seen, it's the health-care council, not your doctor, who has the final say about your treatment. Plus, everyone demands to see a top specialist because why wouldn't they—there are no copays or deductibles. That causes shortages, so health-care councils have to ration health care. Let's bury the single-payer policy before it buries us.
7. A deregulated health-care system of private health insurance in a free market makes us all better off. Firms offer a wide assortment of policies to appeal to every budget and need. Healthy people can pay less to get basic coverage, while those with complicated health histories can buy more coverage. If people choose a high-deductible plan with lower premiums, expanded health savings accounts help mitigate the risks of a costly medical emergency. Their pretax dollars grow over time and cover future out-of-pocket expenses.
8. To heal our broken health-care system, all we need to do is dismantle government health programs. We get rid of Medicare and let working people save and invest their own hard-earned dollars to afford the health care they choose when they retire. We don't need Medicaid, because the free market makes insurance affordable at every income level. And in the rare case when someone can't afford the rock-bottom premiums, then private and corporate philanthropy step in to help.

# Liberal

## Fair-Market Capitalism



Health  
Care

## BIG PICTURE

Working together, government and the profit-motivated private sector create an affordable health-care system with the best-quality treatments and providers, groundbreaking innovations, and access for all.

## POLICY POSITION

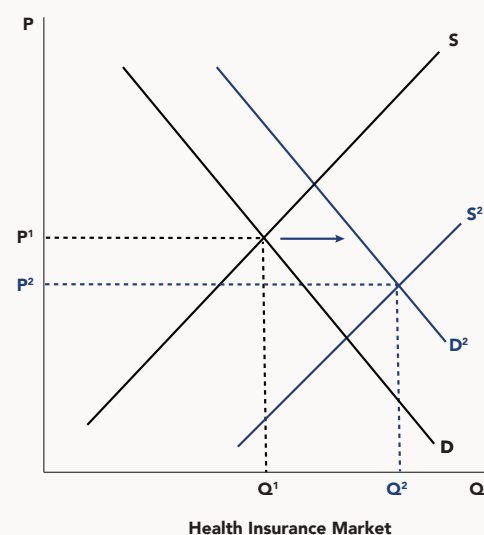
There is lack of access to high-quality health care, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies lead to deadly results by killing motivation, destroying healthy competition, and leaving us with zero choice, inefficiency, and apathy.
- ▶ Conservative policies lead to skyrocketing premiums, outrageous profits, dangerous medicine, public health crises, and masses of uninsured people.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen our regulated, for-profit health-care system and government health-care programs to ensure health and well-being for all:

- Effective oversight and accountability protect us.
- Expand subsidies and Medicaid by taxing the wealthy.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
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  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Health Care Talking Points: Liberal

1. Each one of us absolutely needs health care, but we're vulnerable to fraud and abuse by insurance firms and providers. That's why we need government to watch our backs. It partners with industry to establish best practices and oversight to keep us physically—and financially—healthy. Fair-market capitalism brings us the highest-quality, most affordable, and most accessible health-care system in the world. The best medicine for society is a strong public-private partnership.
2. The liberal approach gives us the best of all possible worlds because we enjoy the gifts of the profit motive and the security of a government that has our best interests at heart. Because of the profit reward system, firms innovate and bring to market amazing, life-saving devices, smarter models for comprehensive care, and highly accurate medical tests. And because of the government, everyone in society—including low-income and elderly people—have access to the care they need.
3. Doctors today can perform life-saving surgeries and regenerate damaged nerves because our regulated health-care system in fair-market capitalism offers the appropriate rewards and incentives for talent and hard work. Say farewell to all this when your democratic socialism delivers the death blow to innovation and motivation by making the drive for profit something to be ashamed of instead of celebrated. We'll lose our best and our brightest, and that brain drain will set us back decades.
4. Call a *code blue* right now, because we're all going into cardiac arrest when the government becomes the sole funder and provider of health care. Sure, a public option for health care is important, but imposing it on everyone is a terrible idea. Radicals, no competition on top of no profit on top of non-experts at the helm will leave us limping along with a mediocre system run on apathy. Democratic socialism sends us back to the dark ages of sickness, suffering, and death.
5. Conservatives, your plan to throw all regulations out the window and leave it to health insurance firms and providers to self-regulate is foolhardy, naïve, and deadly. Because health care is something we all need, we end up with sky-high prices, masses of uninsured people, and scary, low-quality care. While insurance firms rake in billions of dollars in profit, people suffer. Their claims are denied, their premiums shoot up, and their policies get canceled when they get sick.
6. The poor can't pull themselves up by their bootstraps when they're too sick to get out of bed, but conservatives want to get rid of Medicaid and subsidies. With so many workers out sick, our whole economy tanks. What's the first thing that gets cut? Private philanthropy. There goes the conservative fix for the legions of low-income people who can't afford health insurance. Untreated illnesses create epidemics. Oops—conservatives got rid of our public health institutions. Thanks to the free market, we're all doomed.
7. The Affordable Care Act gives us all access to high-quality, affordable care with insurance that covers the basics. Because health care is both regulated and mandated, no one is denied coverage for a preexisting condition. The unemployed buy insurance on government-run health insurance exchanges. Those who need extra help use health insurance subsidies and expanded Medicaid. We fund it by taxing the wealthy. Since their businesses benefit from a society of healthy workers, it's only fair that they contribute more.
8. Government is always watching out for our interests by curtailing fraud, waste, and abuse. It keeps hospitals accountable and transparent in their billing practices and requires providers to use cost-saving and life-saving electronic medical records. Public programs for the elderly, veterans, and federal employees are expanded so that anyone can choose the public option. In every case, it makes financial sense to invest in public options while supporting and regulating private industry.



# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Health  
Care

### BIG PICTURE

As a society, we guarantee health care for all and fund it together to deliver gold-standard medicine that brings us optimal well-being from cradle to grave.

### POLICY POSITION

There is lack of access to high-quality health care, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies throw us to the wolves of profit-driven health-care providers and insurers, which leads to more illness, more suffering, and more financial ruin.
- ▶ Liberal policies prop up the for-profit health insurance industry, mire us in administrative quicksand, and still leave tens of millions of people without health care.

### SOLUTION

Replace a regulated for-profit health-care system and government programs in capitalism with a single-payer health-care system in democratic socialism to ensure health and well-being for all:

- We get the highest quality health care at the lowest cost to society.
- Universal access to health care is guaranteed.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Health Care Talking Points: Radical

1. In democratic socialism, we have a social contract to take care of one another by making sure everyone's basic material needs are met. That way, everyone is able to contribute their talents and skills to the world, to the best of their abilities. This means no one has to worry about how to pay for medical care if they fall ill, or are injured in an accident, or have a child with a disability. Society guarantees health care to all of us from womb to tomb.
2. All it takes is the will of the people to decide that we want health care to be a human right for everyone in society. Then we invest together in a system that provides outstanding care to all, with state-of-the-art medical facilities and equipment; top-notch medical education, research, and development; and robust public health initiatives. Because we fund it together, we can afford to get the highest-quality care, which we all want and need.
3. Conservatives, your idea to leave it up to individuals to sink or swim on their own when it comes to their health care is barbaric. The elderly, the disabled, the sick, and the poor will suffer and die from preventable illnesses because they won't be able to afford health care in your free-market system. The so-called rock-bottom rates you say private insurers will offer for low budgets won't actually cover anything, so the poor and middle class will continue to be bankrupted by medical emergencies.
4. Free-market capitalism is a threat to human life. For-profit pharmaceutical firms will rush new medications to market, and more people will suffer and die from harmful side effects. Insurance firms will write policies with hidden clauses that get them out of actually paying claims when people get sick. Hospitals will inflate prices, and people will avoid getting care. Letting the free-market profit motive guide our health-care system is a deadly prescription that will ultimately hurt us all.
5. Liberals, propping up the for-profit insurance industry to fix the health-care system is like handing out cigarettes to cure lung cancer. It's a business that spends billions of dollars a year on needless administration. Every hospital has to employ multitudes of people who don't actually provide any health care, keep the facility clean, or prepare the meals for patients. In every doctor's office, lab, imaging center, and clinic, they are just moving around paper. What a colossal waste of energy, time, and resources.
6. With liberal policies, millions remain uninsured, while the people in poverty who manage to get on Medicaid are given the bare-minimum benefits, and the elderly still have to pay for part of their Medicare coverage out of their pockets. Private insurance institutionalizes stratification, so the rich buy their way up to better health care, and everyone else is left scraping the bottom of the barrel. The fair-market plan fails because it doesn't pull the plug on capitalism. There's nothing "fair" about it.
7. In democratic socialism, no one lies awake at night worrying about how they will pay for treatments, because a single-payer system is a guarantee that people get the medicine, surgeries, therapies, and everything else they need. And it's not just a right we enjoy; it's our collective responsibility. We fund it through taxes, and it ends up costing far less than paying for health care individually in a *for-profit* system. That's because all the money we pay as a society actually goes toward health care. It's a *for-people* system.
8. Single-payer health care uses resources and public funds wisely. Health-care councils made up of stakeholders, experts, and government representatives design the best mechanisms for oversight, accountability, and transparency. Because the system is funded with their own tax dollars, the worker-owned firms that manage the centers, hospitals, and clinics are highly motivated to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. In addition, because they serve friends, family, and neighbors, they offer the best possible care.

# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



Market Power

## BIG PICTURE

The helpful hand of government prevents market power abuses and restores a competitive environment so that every firm can bring its A game and society as a whole benefits.

## POLICY POSITION

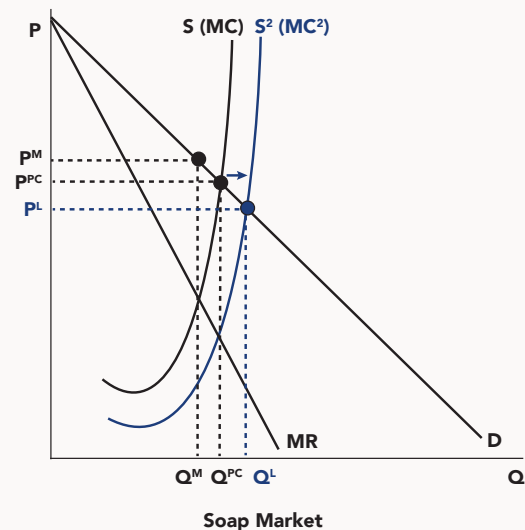
Large firms can abuse their power, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies create waste and inefficiency, resulting in zero innovations, high prices for the few inferior products made, and an unacceptably low standard of living.
- ▶ Conservative policies fling the doors wide open to big firms taking advantage of their market power, leaving consumers with high prices, low quality, and no choices.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen market power regulations to ensure that we get the best products at reasonable prices:

- Strategically expand antitrust laws to promote fair competition.
- Regulate natural monopolies to use resources most efficiently.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Market Power Talking Points: Liberal

1. Firms are self-interested profit maximizers, which is excellent news for all of us. Because they want to improve their bottom lines, they are highly motivated to invent new products, improve the products we already love, and find less expensive ways to provide them. But their drive to work hard, innovate, and create wealth for all is only possible when a strong, impartial, democratically elected government creates a level playing field for competition. Everyone plays by the rules, and everyone can thrive.
2. No one wants to live in a world where a firm is the price maker. We end up paying too much, getting lousy products, and not having enough of what we want and need. Competition is the key to bringing us the lowest prices, highest quality, and right quantities of goods and services. It's also the reason that we have so many good choices at the store. Thanks to strategic government intervention in fair-market capitalism, we have robust competition, which makes us all better off as a society.
3. Human self-interest is the reality no matter what the economic system. In your radical economic system, human self-interest leads to cronyism and petty dictatorships. You put a mishmash of amateurs with their own special interests in charge. Decision-making crawls along at a ridiculously inefficient pace. And because all the essential utilities—water, electricity, the rail system—are owned by the public, market oversight councils have a truly frightening amount of power over our lives.
4. Without a profit motive, radicals have no new medical advances, artificial intelligence, or any other innovations that make life better. And prices are through the roof—if any products are even available. Why? Because they don't mind if firms dominate a market and drive out their competitors. As long as the firms are worker owned, anything goes. On the bright side, at least people get to know their neighbors while they wait in long lines to buy the one brand of soap that's produced in their democratic socialist society.
5. Conservatives, you want to get rid of market power regulations and pretend monopolies are a nonissue. You say it will magically self-correct when a company has a corner on the market. According to you, we should just wait and do nothing while a few big firms control us, manipulate us, suck up all the resources, and prevent us from achieving our potential as a nation. The invisible hand will not beckon new entrepreneurs into the market to save us from marketplaces dominated by profit-hungry firms.
6. Conservatives claim large firms produce more efficiently, which will naturally bring us lower prices, but that's only true if there's competition. If Walmart has low prices today, it's because Target is across the street competing for its business. Even if they have lower costs, they have no incentive to pass those savings along to consumers unless they are in competition for our business. No competition also means no incentive to innovate. Instead of fostering progress, conservative policies leave us with stagnation.
7. Antitrust laws protect fair competition, prevent firms from acting anticompetitively, and break up firms when they get too big and wield too much market power. Instead of markets being a free-for-all where smaller firms can't get in the game and consumers end up hurt, government is the impartial referee that we can count on to make sure the game of commerce is played fairly. It's fair to existing competitors, to new entrepreneurs, and to consumers.
8. When there are huge start-up costs, a single firm can produce at a lower cost and do so using fewer resources. Government grants exclusive licenses to firms that have a natural monopoly in certain industries and then regulates prices, quantity, and quality to make sure they are at the level we would have in perfect competition. It's a win for consumers and fair to firms. In a world of scarcity, government keeps one eye on fair play, and the other eye on efficiency.

# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Market  
Power

## BIG PICTURE

When the primary reason for production is to make things that are necessary, useful, and beneficial for people, worker-owned firms—whether big or small—contribute to the betterment of society.

## POLICY POSITION

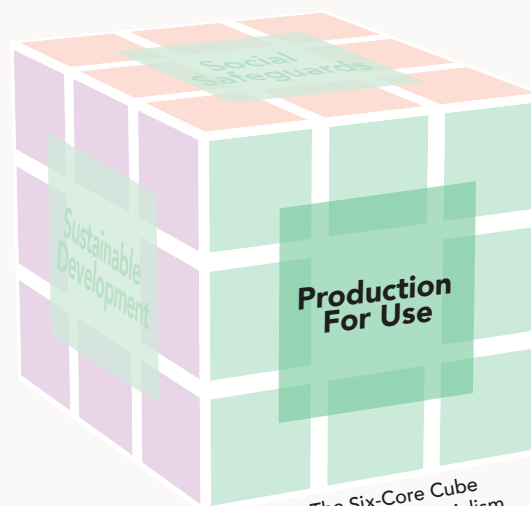
Large firms can abuse their power, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies lead to unrestrained corporate power, market domination, and extreme harm to people and the planet.
- ▶ Liberal policies turn government into an accomplice to corporate greed, impede progress, and make society worse off while a few grow bloated on profit.

## SOLUTION

Replace market power regulations in capitalism with prosocial competition laws in democratic socialism to get the best products at reasonable prices:

- Market oversight councils hold firms accountable.
- Democracy in the Workplace protects society.



The Six-Core Cube  
of Democratic Socialism

- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Market Power Talking Points: Radical

1. All of us thrive in an economic system that puts the well-being of people before profit. You can trust that firms aren't manipulating you, overcharging you, or selling you a low-quality product. They want their products to make you better off. Because democratic socialism is based on a commitment to making things that are necessary, useful, and beneficial, you can feel grateful for the many people you'll never meet who make your material life possible.
2. In democratic socialism, the whole reason for producing anything is to benefit society in some way. This is true whether there is a single worker-owner or thousands of worker-owners in a firm. So when firms vote to merge, the market oversight council will always ask three key questions: will the merger lead to a better, more useful product? Will society be better off? Will it be a win-win for the firms and their local communities? Only if the answers are "yes" to all three will a merger be approved.
3. Conservatives, you leave the bully in charge of the playground. Your policy of unfettered markets enables firms to act with unbridled greed and destroy one another over market share. Firms get big and jack up prices, lower the quality of products, and make the wrong amounts. And what do you conservatives say? "Nothing personal; it's just business." That's code in capitalism for "You're about to get hurt." Conservatives, you're always ready to sacrifice the consumer and the environment to boost your bottom line.
4. The Wild West of free-market capitalism is a harsh and brutal place, but conservatives stubbornly insist that the winner-take-all mentality is what we need to motivate us to make progress. It's profit you worship, and everything else is meaningless. It's a soulless way to live. None of us would be here today if humans weren't even more strongly motivated by compassion, cooperation, and empathy. But we'll never be able to maximize our mutual interest as long as you keep shoving capitalism down our throats.
5. The public-private partnership you liberals love to tout amounts to special interest lobbyists quietly tucking big corporate campaign contributions into the pockets of politicians and government regulators. They pay to eliminate regulations that hurt their profit and impose regulations that keep upstarts out so they can maintain their monopoly power. Even if the system weren't corrupt, no amount of regulation from top-down government will ever make those firms care more about society's well-being than their bottom lines.
6. Liberal antitrust laws don't fix the problem of market power because whether there is one big king producing for profit or lots of small barons producing for profit, the consumer is the one being ripped off when profit drives the economic system. Liberals only worsen the situation by creating a veneer over capitalism to make this economic system appear to be reasonable and manageable. The truth is that capitalism is an utter disaster for humanity and the planet.
7. Prosocial competition laws in democratic socialism promote positive competition and prevent and eliminate destructive competition. They set all firms free to serve the common good and help us all to thrive. They strengthen firms' own internal system of checks and balances. And firms are monitored and guided by market oversight councils, which make sure no company can take advantage of its position in the market to hurt consumers or competitors. Whether a firm is small or big, it is held accountable to society.
8. Market oversight policies help firms by requiring Democracy in the Workplace. This one-person-one-vote policy is a built-in prevention measure against the possibility that some individuals will manipulate firms into taking advantage of consumers. The idea is that the majority will vote to do the right thing because they, themselves, are consumers, parents, and community members. Market oversight policies also protect consumers by preventing firms from price gouging and limiting patents for lifesaving products.

# Conservative

Free-Market Capitalism



Market Power

## BIG PICTURE

Big firms that gain market power on their own are good for society because in a free market, the profit motive spurs innovation and invention, and that's what leads to progress—and low prices.

## POLICY POSITION

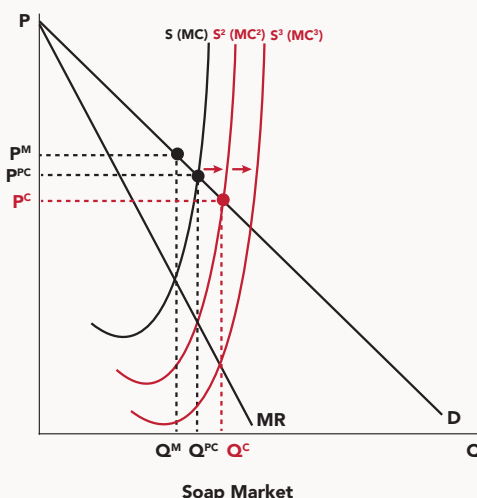
Large firms can abuse their power, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies impede our progress as a society by stifling natural competition, leaving us with higher prices and a shamefully and unnecessarily low standard of living.
- ▶ Radical policies sink firms by giving unqualified, self-interested worker-owners a vote, put councils in charge of distribution, and ultimately lead to a totalitarian state.

## SOLUTION

Reject market power regulations and replace them with free-market competition to get the best products at reasonable prices:

- Allow industries to flourish organically.
- Successful firms are the engines of progress.



- Talking Points Rules:**
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  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
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## Market Power Talking Points: Conservative

1. In free-market capitalism, inventors everywhere work day and night to come up with the next new marvel. That's why today we have computers, cell phones, robots that clean our floors, and self-driving cars. The lure of profit in a wide-open field of opportunities lifts society to the next level of prosperity. Competition is great for society when we let it run its course. We end up with more choices, better products, lower prices, and highly motivated firms that come up with creative ways to earn our business.
2. There is no need to be afraid of firms that gain market power. When a firm gets big, that means it's producing the goods and services that people want, and it's charging a price that people are willing to pay. It's not a problem because the big firm's success automatically attracts entrepreneurs like a beacon in the night. This is how the free market, guided by the invisible hand, motivates firms to work hard to earn our business and make our lives better.
3. Liberals, you want to punish firms that succeed and grow big. That is counterproductive to everyone's prosperity. When government breaks up large firms, prices go up, quality declines, the quantity of goods and services goes down, and we can't compete in the global marketplace. We also lose valuable investment in research and development when firms are broken up. Do you really think a small pharmaceutical company will ever find the cure for cancer? That's never going to happen.
4. Liberal meddling encourages big firms to pay off politicians to pass costly and unnecessary regulations that keep out competitors. On top of that, fair-market capitalist policies actually create monopolies by granting exclusive licenses to select firms to dominate a market. The idea that government regulates these monopolies is a farce. Because of cronyism, regulators get captured by the industry. Not only are consumers then stuck with high prices, they also are stuck with high taxes to pay for this charade.
5. Radicals, great news that you're not against firms getting big, but it seems like you're against firms being successful. Prosocial competition laws are even worse than the antitrust laws we already have. Take your Democracy in the Workplace as an example. It's naive to think giving worker-owners an equal vote in the workplace will do anything other than get nothing done. That's the best-case scenario. The more likely way it plays out is that firms make disastrous business decisions and go belly up.
6. Instead of healthy competition that reins in market power, you radicals have government deciding who gets what and how much it costs. You'd better hope you have a cousin on the market oversight council or a friend at the government distribution center. If not, you'll have no choice but to hunt for products on the black market, and then you'll be breaking the law and busted for buying your basic necessities. That's when socialism takes a turn down the road of totalitarianism.
7. All we have to do is leave markets alone and let the profit incentive fuel healthy competition. Our nation gallops ahead with new technologies, inventions, and innovations. We throw out crony capitalism, where "friends" of the government get the permits, licenses, grants, and tax breaks. We throw out government regulators and leave it to industries to police themselves and to consumers to hold them accountable. We use the justice system to punish unlawful behavior.
8. In free-market capitalism, we celebrate the countless reasons a firm gains an efficiency advantage—it has cost advantages, access to the best resources, the best location, the top leaders, and so forth. But none of these reasons is an excuse to block competition by creating and then propping up a firm's monopoly power. Instead, we restore fair and free competition. We get the best standard of living with low prices and high-quality products. The economy grows, society progresses, and more people thrive.



# Radical

Democratic Socialism



Retirement  
Security

## BIG PICTURE

Guaranteeing every senior a dignified and financially secure old age lifts the burden of worry from people of all ages and creates a thriving society.

## POLICY POSITION

Seniors are economically vulnerable, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies force us to gamble with our retirement nest eggs in a high-risk system of profiteering, and then blame seniors for being poor.
- ▶ Liberal policies are not guaranteed and are based on a flawed design of exploitation and miserly returns, which puts our future well-being at risk.

## SOLUTION

Replace Social Security in capitalism with a universal basic pension (UBP) supplemented by optional worker-owned pension plans in democratic socialism to ensure care and peace of mind for the elderly:

- We are free to make unique contributions during our working years.
- Retirees are a treasured resource in society.



- Talking Points Rules:**
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  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Retirement Security Talking Points: Radical

1. In democratic socialism we recognize that we are mutually dependent on one another. That's why we allocate resources to ensure that everyone's basic material needs are met by society from the beginning of life to the end. In our golden years, we don't have to worry about being poor. Social safeguards work because they're not tied to income; they're tied to our humanity. We all have a right to care and security in old age because we're human beings.
2. Even without personal savings or a pension from your worker-owned firm, you and every other retiree can count on having a guaranteed retirement income that ensures your material well-being. Everyone has a right to be cared for by society in this way. If you were able to work, you funded others' retirement security as well as your own. But it's not just about being paid back. It's about being valued and appreciated for your unique paid and unpaid contributions during your younger years and as a senior citizen.
3. Conservatives, leaving our financial security in the hands of private markets is a scheme to pick our pockets today after mugging us yesterday. The poor don't have a penny to spare and the wealthy are one stock market crash away from destitution. No one wins in capitalism because your so-called healthy returns come from exploiting workers, profiting from child labor, despoiling traditional lands of Indigenous people, and dragging us closer to extinction from global climate change.
4. Throughout our working lives, the drive for profit runs us over, and when we're old and no longer productive, we're dumped by the side of the road. Then conservatives pull over and deliver a sanctimonious lecture. "You bought those expensive lattes and went to Disneyland? Then you have no one but yourself to blame." They leave us struggling to survive on our own. Since there is nothing more to steal from us, we are no longer relevant in their system of free-market capitalism.
5. Tens of millions of people who paid into Social Security may not get it, so the centerpiece of the liberal plan is clearly not a guarantee. Even if liberals keep the system limping along, Social Security can never be fixed because it's built on a warped foundation—the exploited wages of workers and taxes that burden the poor. By design it returns a meager benefit. That's why our elders are eating cat food even though we're the richest nation on Earth. This should make us all sick to our stomachs.
6. Liberals, it doesn't work to use pensions and PRAs to close the shamefully large Social Security gap. Investing in the stock market is no different than gambling our life savings away at the craps table. And pensions are piggy banks for corporate executives and government bureaucrats, who then turn around and slash retirees' benefits. The evidence of the 360-degree failure of your policies are the millions of seniors suffering in poverty right now because there is no real social safety net in fair-market capitalism.
7. The UBP recognizes that everyone's contributions to society are valuable, whether they spent their working years baking bread, unloading trucks, finding cures for diseases, or raising children. It benefits all of us to live our lives knowing that our financial futures are secure. We can leave a job that is unsatisfying to start something new, bringing exciting ideas and innovations to the world because we don't have to worry about taking a risk and ending up poor in our old age.
8. Seniors can make the most of their retirement years in democratic socialism. With guaranteed financial security, funded by progressive taxes, they can relax, pursue their hobbies, spend time with family, volunteer, and more. And if they also happen to have supplementary pensions from their worker-owned firms, then they'll have even more "fun money" to play with in their golden years. But it isn't necessary, because the UBP and other guarantees give every senior the means to enjoy their golden years with dignity.

# Conservative

Free-Market Capitalism



Retirement  
Security

## BIG PICTURE

Complete privatization of retirement savings puts more money in the hands of elders and gives them autonomy, choice, security, and prosperity.

## POLICY POSITION

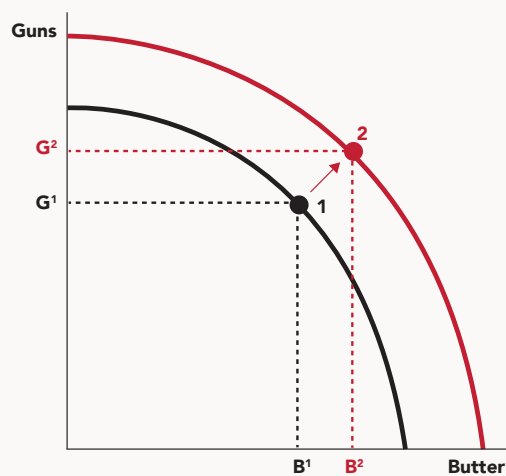
Seniors are economically vulnerable, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies steal from workers, pit one generation against another, deliver an abysmal return on investment, and offer no reliable safety net.
- ▶ Radical policies demotivate workers, drive up taxes, violate our basic human right to be in charge of our own future well-being, and can't deliver on their promises.

## SOLUTION

Reject Social Security and replace it with total privatization of retirement accounts to ensure care and peace of mind for the elderly:

- Diverse investment options meet diverse needs.
- Freedom to pass down our wealth as we choose.



U.S. Production Possibilities Curve

- Talking Points Rules:**
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## Retirement Security Talking Points: **Conservative**

1. In free-market capitalism, we invest our retirement nest eggs in stocks, bonds, and mutual funds. As our accounts grow, so does the economy. Economic growth is the Holy Grail. It means we have more of what we want and need as a society, including care for elders. We're going to take care of them—that's a given—and now we can do it without having to make painful trade-offs. We don't have to sacrifice new assisted living facilities for new roads or better national security.
2. When it comes to your retirement savings, no one cares more about your future financial well-being than you, so you should be the captain of your own ship. The safest choice for all of us is to save and invest our own retirement nest eggs as we see fit. No one needs a degree from business school because there is plenty of guidance and advice available. Even with the ups and downs of the market, history shows that long-term investors come out way ahead.
3. Liberals, Social Security takes money from today's workers and hands it over to today's retirees. Instead of creating value, it just relies on future taxation. It's a Ponzi scheme. That's why, with demographic changes, this ill-considered program is on the verge of collapse. We're stuck on this sinking ship, but no one can jump into a lifeboat because we're not allowed to opt out of Social Security. Even though we're (unwilling) investors, we have no power and no say over what happens to our money.
4. Social Security is bad for society. It creates a disincentive to work hard because liberals whittle away our paychecks, promise unrealistic payouts, and give us incentives to retire early. Social Security also gives firms a disincentive to create more jobs. Government hits them with payroll taxes for every worker. Firms are cornered into shifting the burden onto the workers they do hire by cutting their pay by that amount. Social Security shrinks the whole economy without actually giving us retirement security.
5. Radicals, your UBP creates a totalitarian state where the masses have no say over their own financial lives. On top of that, your democratic socialist system can never generate the means to fund the UBP or the other social safeguards, because everyone waits around for their freebies instead of being productive. There is no universe in which a person would put in the extra hours and go the extra mile when the rewards are going to be exactly the same for sitting around and wasting time all day.
6. The UBP is twice as bad as Social Security because radicals rip off working people twice. First, workers pay outrageously high taxes to fund it along with the other social safeguards. Second, supplemental pensions from worker-owned firms once again take retirement savings out of workers' individual control. No matter which way you turn in democratic socialism, no one has the freedom to ensure their own solid financial future for retirement. That guarantees worry and sleepless nights for all.
7. When we replace Social Security with PRAs, we keep more of our income because we don't pay a big chunk to the government. We also get the big chunk of money our employers were forced to pay into Social Security. Now we all have more to invest in PRAs. Picture all that money flowing into the stock market and bond market. It grows the whole economy, including everyone's retirement accounts. In the rare case of seniors needing more help, philanthropy provides a reliable safety net.
8. When we're free to manage our own retirement funding, no one has to worry that their investments will be wiped out. There is plenty of choice so we can easily diversify our portfolios and choose the level of risk that is appropriate for our age, savings goals, and personal preferences. With PRAs in a free-market environment, we have the best of all possible worlds: the freedom to control our own money, grow it for our retirement, spend it as we want, and pass it on to our heirs.

# Liberal

## Fair-Market Capitalism



Retirement  
Security

## BIG PICTURE

Workers pay into Social Security and earn a safety net that is supplemented with other retirement savings so that they have what they need to flourish in their golden years.

## POLICY POSITION

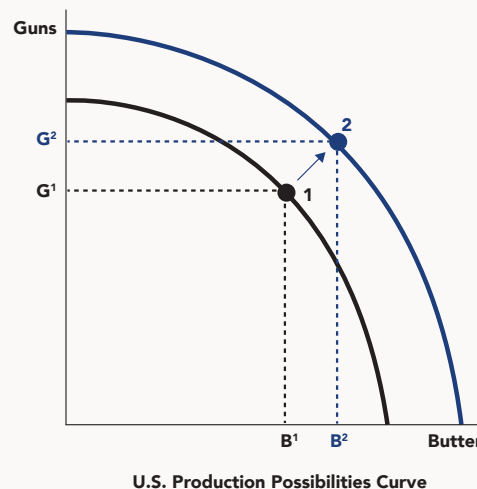
Seniors are economically vulnerable, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies equally reward the lazy and the industrious, driving a stake in the heart of motivation so that no wealth is created, leaving seniors to take the fall.
- ▶ Conservative policies destroy our safety net and then force us to risk our entire retirement nest eggs, leaving us all vulnerable to poverty in our old age.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen Social Security and improve incentives for supplemental private retirement savings programs to ensure care and peace of mind for the elderly:

- Working people are motivated to work harder and longer.
- Strategic and responsible reforms make it sustainable.



- Talking Points Rules:**
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## Retirement Security Talking Points: Liberal

1. We're incredibly lucky to live in a democracy where our government works on our behalf to ensure that we'll be secure in our golden years. Of course, we should still save on our own. But because we have a social safety net, we are willing to take more risks for greater rewards. Peace of mind comes from knowing that we'll be able to afford the basic necessities when we stop bringing home a paycheck. We'll have what we need to flourish in old age.
2. Fair-market capitalism ensures that working people can support themselves without worry in their retirement years because they pay into the system during their productive years, as well as saving on their own in private retirement accounts and pension plans. Using a creative variety of tax and benefit programs, the helpful hand of government gives everyone the right incentives to work hard and save. All of this combines to spur economic growth while enabling elders to enjoy a dignified old age.
3. Radicals, the UBP fails because you give it to everyone, whether they worked hard or not. Instead of guaranteeing retirement security for all, you guarantee that everyone in your democratic socialist society is unmotivated to contribute during their productive years. The lazy don't bother working hard. And the rare few who actually managed to stoke the fires of ambition in themselves in a profit-phobic society quickly find that flame snuffed out because no one wants to feel like a chump.
4. The UBP and all the other radical social safeguards are funded through taxes. In a society of freeloaders, nothing is produced, and no tax revenue is generated. That means there is no funding for the UBP—or any radical social safeguards. Therefore, they never materialize. On top of that, because the UBP promises full financial security in retirement, no one bothers to save on their own, and firms have no real stake in creating supplemental workplace pensions. This leaves people impoverished at every stage of life.
5. Conservatives, let's just get one thing clear: Social Security is not and never has been a program of hand-outs to freeloaders. Stop trying to twist the meaning of an entitlement. All workers pay in, and all workers are entitled to get it paid back in retirement. Stop trying to get rid of a program that's built on the American tradition of hard work and reward. Putting our retirement nest eggs in your one basket of PRAs is both irresponsible and destructive.
6. The conservative plan to completely privatize retirement savings is a disaster in the making. Just look at the history of the stock market. Every decade or so, a speculative bubble burst or other crisis wipes out people's accounts. Don't ask seniors to play a game of musical chairs with their financial futures. If the music stops when they're counting on that investment income, they're out of luck. Without Social Security, seniors don't have time to play the long game, which is how people succeed in the stock market.
7. Social Security is a vital safety net for all working people. We don't want to return to a time when seniors who worked hard ended up poor and desperate or were financial burdens on their families. This is one of our country's most successful programs. It keeps tens of millions of seniors out of poverty. We make needed changes to keep the program viable for generations to come, including reforming it by ending the regressive funding structure so that all pay their fair share.
8. Social Security in combination with pensions and private retirement accounts gives us the utmost freedom to choose the retirement security we want, and the peace of mind knowing that our retirement nest eggs are not all in one basket. It's the ultimate diversification strategy. If you lose your savings on a bad investment, or if there's a recession, or if you lose your job before your pension vests, or if your pension fund goes bankrupt, Social Security won't go away. It's the cornerstone of everyone's retirement security.

# Conservative

## Free-Market Capitalism



The Federal Budget

### BIG PICTURE

Limited government spending and tax cuts stimulate the economy and shrink the deficit, freeing our nation to flourish.

### POLICY POSITION

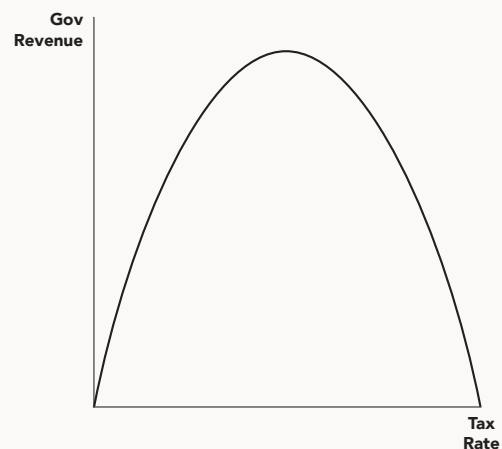
Irresponsible budgeting and money management are problems, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies are empty promises that can never be funded because there is no economic growth, and since public banks inevitably need bailouts, more money is printed so prices skyrocket.
- ▶ Liberal policies create a bloated government and cycles of deficits, which lead to higher interest rates that crowd out firms and result in devastating rates of inflation.

### SOLUTION

Reject adaptable balanced budgets and a flexible money supply and replace them with annual balanced budgets and a constrained money supply to ensure financial freedom to invest in our future:

- Starve the beast of government to eliminate deficits and debt.
- Money's only function is to ease transactions, not to interfere with prices.



Laffer Curve

- Talking Points Rules:**
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## The Federal Budget Talking Points: **Conservative**

1. The good news is we can fund the federal budget without any need to deficit spend when it covers only the essential roles of government. Yes, we need government to provide national security, a justice system, and infrastructure, but anything else is cut. Then we use the right, low level of taxes—income, capital gains, and corporate—to pay for this right-size government, which gives individuals and firms the right incentives to work hard and be productive. This is how we reach our potential as a nation.
2. Government requires me to pay high income taxes and then spends only a fraction of it on things that are necessary. We need discipline to cut all those entitlement programs. Every year, when Congress passes yet another deficit budget, it means more debt for you, me, and our descendants. They will be paying it back for generations to come. By getting government out of the way and creating a business-friendly environment, the economy grows, and we're released from the shackles of debt.
3. Radicals, you make big promises, but you can't possibly deliver on them because democratic socialism is against profit. That is what makes your integrated balanced budget an impossible dream. Do you see the problem? Society generates no wealth because there's no reason for firms to produce. It's pointless to try to fund your budget by raising taxes. There's nothing to tax. Inevitably, you end up with massive national debt, society-wide poverty, apathy, and no hope for the future.
4. The radical idea of public banking is deeply flawed. With no price signals and no profit motive, there's no way public banks can make good loans. Guided by idealism rather than responsible lending practices, they fund every pie-in-the-sky idea. If the firm defaults, the public banking councils print more money and bail out the bank. This leads to dangerous levels of inflation. But the council has no choice. If public banks fail, the whole money system comes crashing down. Democratic socialism is unsustainable.
5. We all know it's a slippery slope to live on borrowed money, but liberals want to keep leading us down that dangerous path. We borrow to pay for their adaptable balanced budgets, which are padded with wasteful government bureaucracy and programs. Assistance programs hurt individuals and society as a whole because they demotivate people from working. And liberal progressive taxes demotivate entrepreneurs and firms from contributing more to society. With fair-market capitalism, GDP growth is cut off at the knees.
6. Liberals, your government is a beast you keep feeding with high taxes. It sharpens its fangs on deficit spending, which you pay for by printing money. This is a terrible practice because it creates alarming inflation. To add insult to injury, government also borrows from the public. Those lenders would have loaned their money to private businesses if government hadn't gotten involved. You not only mismanage money, you crowd out firms and make it even harder for the economy to achieve its potential.
7. We commit to low taxes that exactly equal our low expenditures, and the result is an economy that lives up to its full potential. Annual balanced budgets starve the beast of government. We have the discipline to rein in overspending and stop acting as if our shameful national debt doesn't matter. It definitely matters. If lawmakers don't have the discipline to pass a balanced budget on their own, let's amend the U.S. Constitution and make an annual balanced budget the law.
8. With annual balanced budgets, say goodbye to yearly deficits and growing national debt. Say hello to firms having the money and incentives they need to start and expand businesses. Say hello to a money supply that is constrained through a gold standard, competition among private currencies, or a predetermined rate of growth. We let money function as it was intended—to facilitate transactions in the real economy—rather than giving us whiplash from wild swings between inflation and deflation.



# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



The Federal Budget

## BIG PICTURE

Our nation's resources create prosperity for all because we pay the appropriate level of taxes to fulfill our social contracts without going into debt and burdening those who come after us.

## POLICY POSITION

Irresponsible budgeting and money management are problems, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies try to spend their way out of a failing system with corporate welfare and token assistance programs, burying the nation in debt for generations to come.
- ▶ Conservative policies abandon the poor and enrich the wealthy, generating annual deficits along with suffocating levels of personal and national debt.

## SOLUTION

Replace adaptable balanced budgets and a flexible money supply in capitalism with integrated balanced budgets and public banking in democratic socialism to ensure financial freedom to invest in our future:

- We use appropriate taxes with efficient and effective spending.
- Our money works to our benefit.



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  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## The Federal Budget Talking Points: Radical

1. In democratic socialism, we're here to take care of one another because we recognize that you are my most valuable resource, and I am yours. This is the radical view of the world, and it's reflected in our federal budget. When all of us have what we need to thrive, all of us are able to participate in the economy. Everyone shares in the responsibility to fund our social commitments, and every decision in society reflects our shared commitment to prioritize the well-being of people and the planet.
2. Politicians like to claim that the country is broke, but we have everything we need right now to take care of everyone. We just have the wrong priorities in capitalism. In democratic socialism, human beings are more important than profit. We bring the economy into balance with right-sized growth and development that respects the needs of people and of ecosystems. Future generations will inherit a sophisticated infrastructure and viable natural resources, and they won't get stuck with trillions of dollars of debt.
3. Every year, you liberals increase the national debt with deficit spending because you made it possible for firms to slither out of paying their fair share. You include a few assistance programs for the poor, but they don't even scratch the surface of what people need to thrive. They only serve to keep workers grinding along just enough to be exploited for another day. The further insult is that they and their children and generations to come are the ones who will get stuck with the bill.
4. Our problems are not solved by the privately owned Federal Reserve. The top-down decision-makers print money to keep the system of capitalism from toppling over. Its goal is to grow GDP, not to improve quality of life for people or make the planet more livable. The national debt is just a symptom of the rot at the heart of fair-market capitalism. It's exhausting to watch liberals keep trying to prop up capitalism with adaptable balanced budgets. Their solutions can never fix the problem because capitalism itself is the problem.
5. Conservatives, you imagine you are the knight in shining armor who slays the beast of big government, but you're waving your sword at the wrong target. It's free-market capitalism and your limited roles of government that prevent society from creating high-quality lives for all. To feed themselves, the poor are cornered into taking on intolerable levels of personal debt from profit-making loan sharks—perfectly legal in your unregulated capitalism. You force people into poverty and then have the gall to blame the victims.
6. The conservative plan to constrain the money supply leaves it in the control of the private banking system, where it further enriches the wealthy with our hard-earned tax money. Then conservatives make the rich even richer by cutting taxes on the wealthy, while breezily insisting that these cuts will pay for themselves. In what fantasy world are they living? Their policies create a mountain of debt, which will loom over people for generations to come. It's a monument to the destructive system of free-market capitalism.
7. With integrated balanced budgets, we realize the vision of democratic socialism. Together, we fund social safeguards and all the roles of government so that we can reach our potential as a society. The beauty of it is that we all pay in to fund the things we could never afford on our own—universal health care, a diplomatic corps, worker-owned business incubators, a space program, public wildlife preserves, and more. We have all the resources we need and the right priorities to achieve the best quality of life.
8. In democratic socialism, a portion of each year's budget is used for discretionary spending by cities and towns. The decision-making process is guided by community councils using participatory budgeting. The money is used to pay for the events and programs that make communities unique. We also use public banking at the local, state, and national levels to manage our tax dollars wisely. With our money used for the public good, it works for us and becomes the revenue stream we invest in our communities.

# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



The Federal Budget

## BIG PICTURE

Strategic spending and taxation policies meet the needs of society when the economy is on track, and when unexpected events occur, we can respond nimbly and stay debt-free.

## POLICY POSITION

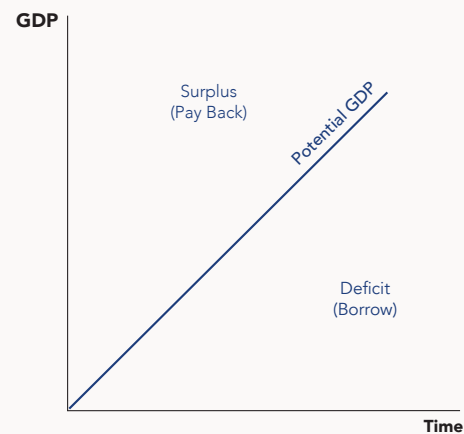
Irresponsible budgeting and money management are problems, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies create deficits and debt by cutting taxes on the rich, abandon the most vulnerable, fail us during crises, and crush growth.
- ▶ Radical policies can't pay for society's commitments, lead to insurmountable debt, invite totalitarianism, and lock us into an easily corruptible banking system.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen adaptable balanced budgets and a flexible money supply to ensure financial freedom to invest in our future:

- We deficit spend responsibly and then pay it back.
- The independence of the Federal Reserve is maintained.



Fair-Market Capitalism and GDP over Time

- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## The Federal Budget Talking Points: Liberal

1. The helpful hand of government collects everyone's tax dollars and spends them on our behalf to bring us the benefits of a modern society. We can afford to fix our bridges, outfit our military, upgrade our electrical grids, and develop new cures for diseases. We can afford to create opportunities, job-training programs, food assistance, and preschool. In fair-market capitalism, government makes sure that everyone plays by the rules and contributes their fair share so that all have a chance to flourish.
2. We aspire to realize our potential as a nation, but we know we're walking a tightrope. An unpredictable event such as a pandemic, energy crisis, destabilizing stock market boom, or anything else can throw the economy off course. Happily, we don't have to worry. Government has the flexibility and the expertise to respond to the needs of the economy. It strategically uses the federal budget to put the economy back on track.
3. Conservatives, your tax cuts to the top 1 percent and outrageous corporate tax breaks in the name of job creation are just blatant pandering to big campaign donors. Your handouts to the rich deprive the American people of the revenue we need to succeed as a society. The idea that tax cuts pay for themselves is laughable. You won't even raise enough revenue to fund the three roles of government you tolerate. Your plan ensures deficits and growing debt, with no hope of ever paying it back.
4. Instead of helping the hardworking poor and middle class succeed so they can rise and contribute more to society, conservatives scold them and tell them to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. They call their spending cuts "starving the beast," but it's humans who go to bed hungry at night. During times of economic stress, their annual balanced budgets and constrained money supply turn what should be small bumps into ballooning crises. They make life meaner, harsher, and more brutal for hardworking people.
5. Radicals, there's no motivation to work hard when everything is handed to you by the government. No production means no tax revenues, so your integrated balanced budgets can't be funded. The government has to borrow. Year after year, the national debt grows more monstrous. Because not enough is produced, the government ends up deciding who gets the food, health care, housing, and everything else we need to survive. Democratic socialism inevitably leads to totalitarianism.
6. Public banking in democratic socialism is a bad idea. Worker-owned firms have government contracts to operate public banks, but their main motivation is getting their contracts renewed. It leads to bribery, special favors, and preferential treatment. Resources go to the most powerful players rather than to investments that bring the highest returns to society. Without the sensible profit focus of fair-market capitalism and a government led by expert decision-makers, society becomes a bankrupt free-for-all.
7. We all benefit from a government that is nimble and can adapt to the needs of the moment. When times are tough, it deficit spends, and the benefits multiply across society. When the economy booms, it pays back the outstanding debt. With adaptable balanced budgets, no one has to lose sleep every time there's overexuberance in the stock market or a bad hurricane season. We expand the helpful hand of government, and we get a debt-free, balanced, healthy economy.
8. The Federal Reserve is like the wingman for the Treasury. It's independent but uses a flexible money supply to help fly the plane in the same direction. It accommodates government spending in a crisis by buying government securities on the secondary market. That puts more money into circulation. It cools off an overheated economy by selling securities back to the public. That pulls money out of circulation. By cooling off and warming up the economy as needed, the Fed sensibly keeps our financial house in order.

# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



## BIG PICTURE

Government ensures fair international competition, protects jobs and the environment, preserves our national security, strengthens our alliances, and secures our position in the world.

## POLICY POSITION

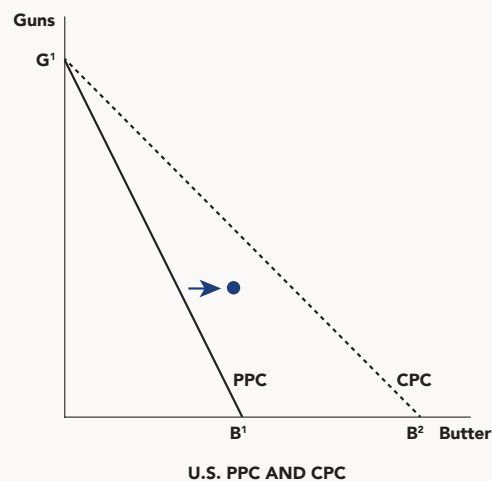
When trade relationships break down, society loses out, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies leave us at the mercy of foreign countries and ruthless multinational corporations, putting our sovereignty and our physical, financial, and material well-being at risk.
- ▶ Radical policies reject the only economic system that has ever successfully created worldwide prosperity and leave us without the products we need or the possibility of trading for them.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen trade protections to have an improved standard of living through trade:

- Expand government intervention to unleash trade’s highest potential.
- Safeguard national security, fair competition, and jobs.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## International Trade Talking Points: Liberal

1. Whenever we do something risky, we want to know that someone has double-checked the safety lines. We want guardrails on narrow mountain roads. Likewise, when we engage in international trade, we want sensible precautions that protect our national security, jobs, and economy. Government makes objective, measured, and informed decisions about trade deals. It determines the best ways to structure our foreign relationships so that we can enjoy the myriad benefits that come from international trade.
2. Global competition is vital to our quality of life. It inspires us to create better products and new innovations and technologies. Government regulations ensure that international competition occurs on a level playing field so that everyone has a chance to participate and succeed. In fair-market capitalism, our vital domestic industries thrive, and firms are competitive at home and around the world. Multinational firms are held accountable, and consumers and workers are protected from the rampant excesses of profiteering.
3. Conservatives, when you get rid of trade protections, you might as well stick a note on the back of the United States that says, "Kick me!" Without government to watch our backs, we get a bad deal every time. You let our economy get pummeled by trading partners that use currency manipulation, subsidies, dumping, pirating intellectual property, and other cheats. You can see only the profit potential. Yes, profit is very important, but we can realize profit from trade without getting ripped off by a bad deal.
4. As poet Robert Frost wrote: "Good fences make good neighbors." Trade protections are the good fences that keep the global economy healthy. But conservatives keep their blinders on and crow about store shelves stocked with foreign goods for sale at low prices. Any price is too high when you don't have a job. Let's be clear that with no domestic competition, those prices won't stay low for long. Without government oversight, the handful of the world's mega rich prosper at the expense of the rest of us.
5. Radicals, you want to dismantle the only economic system that has ever lifted the standard of living for the whole world. All we need are sensible trade protections in fair-market capitalism to address abusive practices by multinational firms. But you want to impoverish countries by refusing to trade or invest there. Your quaint notion of "local control" denies them opportunities to attain a decent material life. If local control were truly a magic solution, then those countries wouldn't have been suffering in the first place.
6. Radicals talk about multinational corporations as if they're the big bad wolf, but it's democratic socialism that should scare us. In an economic system with no profit motive, we languish with outdated goods and lackadaisical services. Inevitably, illegal markets for imports sprout up because people want and need those products. The next thing you know, government is cracking down, and a minute later we're living under the thumb of bureaucrats. History reveals this pattern time and time again.
7. People the world over benefit from voluntary trade among nations, and of course we want our country to benefit from trade. That means we need the rules to be fair so that everyone has a chance to compete and succeed. We use tariffs and nontariff barriers to keep our domestic and international markets competitive. Restrictions on foreign direct investment and subsidies for key industries in the United States safeguard our national security by ensuring that we will never be dependent on foreign powers for our survival.
8. With trade protections and strong government involvement, cheaters are punished, while trustworthy trading partners are rewarded. Our planet is cleaner, consumers are safer, and businesses thrive. And as a global leader, we use our influence to motivate our trading partners to protect human rights and the environment in their countries, which promotes social and economic justice throughout the world. We should expand government's role so it can do even more to strategically balance the risks and benefits of trade.

# Conservative

Free-Market Capitalism



International  
Trade

## BIG PICTURE

Removing all barriers to trade makes people everywhere better off by vastly increasing the variety of goods and services available and stimulating profitable partnerships throughout the world.

## POLICY POSITION

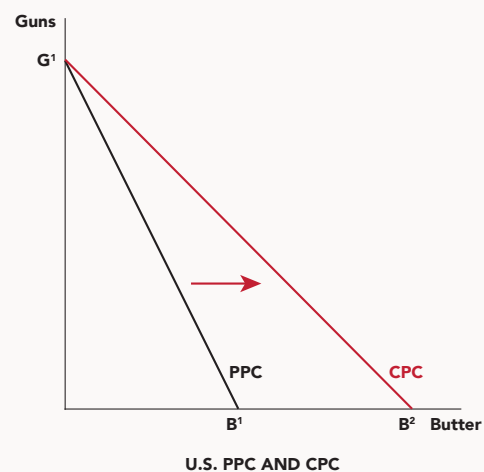
When trade relationships break down, society loses out, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies create a triple whammy of unemployment by rejecting foreign investment, refusing to trade with capitalist firms, and driving businesses under by making products too expensive.
- ▶ Liberal policies waste billions to save dead-end jobs and give us higher prices, shoddy products, less variety, and lower quality of life, while miring us in trade wars.

## SOLUTION

Reject trade protections and replace them with free trade to have an improved standard of living through trade:

- We get lower prices and more innovations, choices, and opportunities.
- Peace, prosperity, and harmony abound across the globe.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## International Trade Talking Points: **Conservative**

1. When we are able to freely trade with the other free nations of the world, it's a win for society and the planet. If my firm wants to do business in Bolivia, Spain, Kenya, or anywhere else, I can buy and sell goods, services, resources, and machines without asking for permission from the government or the World Trade Organization. With no limits to how much or with whom we can trade, everyone can maximize their happiness with more of the things that make life better.
2. The beauty of international trade in free-market capitalism is that we experience the magic of markets on a global scale. We may not share languages, cultures, or other common ground, but when we build trust through mutually beneficial trade, we become essential to one another's well-being, turning strangers into allies and good neighbors. Suppliers and demanders come together, and price signals direct resources to their best uses. Guided as if by an invisible hand, we realize the promise of capitalism across the entire planet.
3. Radicals, your big policy idea is to export your brand of mass poverty to the whole world. You see global capitalism as a giant boulder that rolls over less developed nations and crushes them. But you have it all wrong. Sweatshops create better jobs for people. If you ask a worker if they're glad to have that job, they've already answered you with their feet. They show up for work every day because that job is their pathway out of poverty.
4. I wish radicals would be honest and admit that their fair-trade principles only make *them* feel more righteous, but they don't help the world's workers. First, they refuse to trade with capitalist multinational firms, so those companies lose money and lay off workers. Second, the prices for radicals' fair-trade-certified bananas, cocoa, hammocks, and acai berries are pushed so high that consumers buy fewer of them and more people lose their jobs. Radicals create unemployment and impoverishment for all.
5. Liberals, your trade protections are a disaster and miss the big picture—as usual. You read in the news that factories are closing, so you react by slapping on new tariffs and quotas to keep imports down to try to save those jobs. Consumers suffer with higher prices, fewer choices, and lower-quality products. Then you subsidize industries that should not be propped up, and taxpayers are stuck footing the bill for those handouts. You bleeding-heart liberals make bad economic decisions that hurt us all.
6. We are not the world's police, and we shouldn't be. We should respect the sovereignty of other countries and stop presuming we know what's best for their people and their environment. When liberals play politics with trade protections, other countries retaliate by raising their tariffs and imposing quotas on us. Not only does that sink our chances of prospering, it leads to trade wars. It leaves our country poorer, more at risk, and more isolated in the world.
7. The nations of the world offer one another a feast of goods and services, but trade barriers keep the feast from being served or cut us off at the appetizers. Free trade liberates us from unnecessary government meddling and allows for robust international commerce. Our country gains more jobs, people have higher incomes, and products are not only better, but they are lower priced. We all enjoy a wide array of new innovations brought to market, and we achieve a higher standard of living for all.
8. Free trade is our passport to building wealth and creating prosperity here and abroad. Multinational firms move capital into regions that are looking to develop their economies. They are the world's job creators, and their profit-driven efforts solve poverty and foster peace and harmony. Countries are far less likely to have bloody conflicts when they are able to feed and house their own people and when they are mutually dependent on the goods and services they all provide to one another.



# Radical

Democratic Socialism



International Trade

## BIG PICTURE

When trade relationships are founded on a commitment to the well-being of communities around the world, we all prosper with more choices, a cleaner planet, and innovations that raise everyone's quality of life.

## POLICY POSITION

When trade relationships break down, society loses out, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies trick and trap people into believing the problems of trade in capitalism are being addressed, leaving us at the mercy of corporations, which are forced to put profits before people.
- ▶ Conservative policies destroy communities, cultures, and ecosystems as firms race across the globe making decision after decision to trade our well-being for their profit.

## SOLUTION

Replace trade protections in capitalism with fair trade and collaboration in democratic socialism to have an improved standard of living through trade:

- Workers around the world unite to make life better for one another.
- Multinational cooperatives are a force for good.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
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  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## International Trade Talking Points: Radical

1. We all want international trade to make us better off. In democratic socialism, the “us” includes our trading partners. When we buy corn from Argentina, we can feel confident that the people who grew it were paid fairly and have what they need to thrive. When they buy our products, they can feel confident that our workers were also treated fairly and have what they need to thrive. We can all rest assured that a commitment to healthy communities spreads well-being throughout the world.
2. With local control over our resources, we don’t have to worry that a foreign firm will barge in and take over, or that production will harm people or release toxic pollutants into the environment. Worker-owned firms think globally and act locally. We understand that we are all connected to one another. Because our self-interest is our mutual interest, we make decisions that ensure that production is environmentally sustainable and products are beneficial to communities here and around the world so everyone can flourish.
3. Liberals, you lull us into believing that trade protections in capitalism address the problem, but capitalism won’t be fixed by a veneer of liberal concern. You may slightly slow the loss of domestic jobs, but you never address workplace exploitation. You may limit some foreign direct investment, but you continually put communities at risk by enabling firms to drain their resources for short-term profits. None of your tariffs and nontariff barriers are effective against the voraciousness of profit-driven multinationals.
4. In fair-market capitalism, politicians are in the pockets of corporate interests. So when liberals ban cancer-causing fertilizers, firms just pay off politicians, and a loophole appears that allows them to make it for export. Farmers in other countries spray it on the food we import, and we are exposed to those carcinogens after all. When people develop cancer, liberals feel really bad about it—but not bad enough to admit that their ideas will never root out the cause of the problem, which is capitalism.
5. Conservatives export the lie that free trade in capitalism lifts the standard of living for all. Tell that to the workers in industrialized countries who lose their jobs and end up with communities that are ghost towns of rusted-out factories. Tell that to the workers in the developing world who labor for sixteen hours a day in sweatshops for thirteen cents an hour. Free-market capitalism doesn’t lift any of us. It leaves human beings around the world sick, bankrupt, and drowning in pollution.
6. Conservatives, multinational firms have no commitment to any country or any ideal. They are on a barely concealed mission to own the planet, and your free-trade policy hands it to them on a silver platter. Multinationals have no heart or soul—they aren’t human beings; they are profit-making entities. Now you let them do what they want with impunity because they own the media, the politicians, the courts, the education system, the workers, and you.
7. International trade councils forge mutually beneficial agreements that make the whole world better off. Based on the principles of fair trade, they promote just compensation for workers, safe working conditions, environmentally sustainable production processes, and an end to child labor and forced labor. Exploitation is eliminated and the well-being of workers and communities increases throughout the world. People are able to meet their material needs and enjoy a high standard of living.
8. Instead of sailing in and taking over, multinational cooperatives participate in economic development in partnership with local communities. They collaborate by investing in capital improvements; providing expert consulting, technical training, and mentoring; giving low-interest loans; and more. Worker-owned firms use their purchasing power to prioritize trade with foreign worker-owned firms, which brings democracy into the workplace. Social and economic justice spread throughout the world.

# Radical

## Democratic Socialism



Economic  
Stability

## BIG PICTURE

Resting on the commitments of democratic socialism, when the economy hits a bump, no one is left behind, and together we get back on the road to prosperity.

## POLICY POSITION

Inflation and unemployment undermine the well-being of society, but . . .

- ▶ Liberal policies in an economic crisis offer paltry assistance programs that barely scratch the surface of unmet needs, throw us under the bus with high interest rates, and reward firms for doing the wrong thing.
- ▶ Conservative policies exacerbate the booms and busts inherent in capitalism through their ludicrous argument that making the rich richer grows and stabilizes the economy.

## SOLUTION

Replace Keynesian economics in capitalism with socialist economics in democratic socialism to ensure stable prices and full employment.

- Government-guaranteed jobs are a basic human right.
- Wealth ripples out to the whole society.



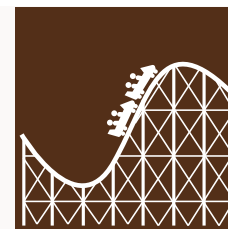
- Talking Points Rules:**
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## Economic Stability Talking Points: Radical

1. In democratic socialism, it's not luck or privilege that gives each of us access to outstanding housing, excellent nutrition, top-notch education, or state-of-the-art health care. It's our right as human beings. This is the key to a thriving economy. Because we're each given what we need to live up to our potential throughout our lives, we are able to produce the goods and services others need to do the same. Economic stability and beneficial products occur in a continuous and magnificent self-reinforcing loop.
2. Ups and downs are a fact of life, and no one can control or plan for every unexpected crisis, but when the economy goes off track, worker-owners respond by acting in their mutual interest to make sure that everyone continues to have an income. They might vote for across-the-board pay cuts or reduced hours, or some might agree to move to public-sector jobs temporarily. By taking care of one another, wealth and well-being ripple out to all.
3. Liberals, when the economy overheats and the Fed raises interest rates, workers suffer. First, they have to cut their spending, and then they get laid off when demand falls. In a downturn, your government stimulus checks barely meet people's needs. You make sure they are still desperate enough to go back to work for low wages. Stop balancing the economy on the backs of workers. Your stabilization policies are just thinly disguised attempts to get the exploitation train back on track.
4. When liberals give corporate welfare to the firms responsible for crashing the economy, it's like they're giving a dog a treat for ruining the carpet. This guarantees that firms will continue to make terrible decisions that destabilize the economy. They'll just look forward to another government bailout and more end-of-year bonuses for executives. And liberal regulations to rein them in are a joke. Remember those banks that were "too big to fail"? Today's banks are even bigger and engage in even sketchier financial shenanigans.
5. In bad times, conservatives say that we should get government out of the way and then leave the economy alone. Their trickle-down economics is dangerous, and they lie about leaving government out of it. They have a very active government agenda. They use government to cut taxes on the rich and regulations on firms. They constrain the money supply so that it works only for the wealthy. They give the rich free rein to exploit workers, ruin the environment, and take even more risks that crash the economy.
6. During times of desperation, you conservatives leave us dependent on private philanthropy to get our basic material needs met. What that really means is that you leave us at the mercy of the mega-billionaires who got rich by exploiting us. Now they get to decide what kind of education we can have, what kind of health care, food security, and everything else. This is how your free-market capitalism destroys democracy and replaces it with plutocracy—government by the wealthy—where only misery trickles down.
7. During a downturn, the federal jobs guarantee is the trampoline that keeps people employed. Public-sector jobs give people a decent income, and the jobs serve real needs in society. Best of all, people are able to continue to contribute to society without interruption, so everyone's quality of life improves. We also use networking hubs to support worker-owned firms in forging mutually beneficial collaborations so that they make decisions that prevent the economy from booming and busting in the first place.
8. Democratic socialism keeps the economy from going too far off track so that well-being ripples out to the whole society. With public banking, our money works for us because it is invested in projects that improve our collective well-being. When the economy is knocked off course, public banks are guided by public banking councils to act strategically so communities can recover. No one can plan for every unexpected crisis, but democratic socialism quickly returns us to the stability we need.

# Liberal

Fair-Market Capitalism



Economic Stability

## BIG PICTURE

Strategically using the helpful hand of government, we act responsibly to prevent crises and recover quickly from unexpected events to get the economy safely back on the road.

## POLICY POSITION

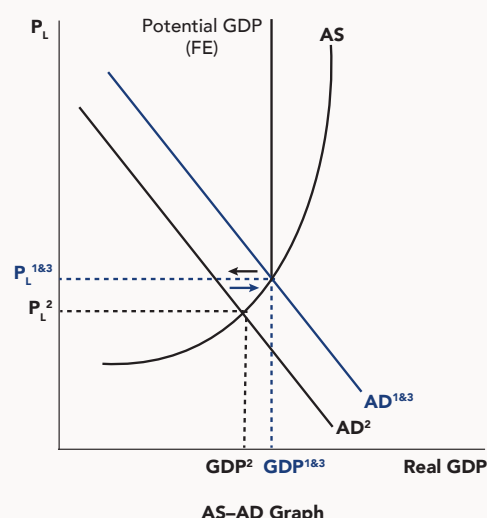
Inflation and unemployment undermine the well-being of society, but . . .

- ▶ Conservative policies create instability by rejecting sensible regulations, and in a crisis they worsen the swings with giveaways to the wealthy while the rest of us are left to struggle on our own.
- ▶ Radical policies create overdependence on the government, drive up taxes, kill motivation, and leave amateurs in charge of monetary decisions.

## SOLUTION

Strengthen Keynesian economics to ensure stable prices and full employment:

- Expand government’s role during times of crisis.
- Wealth bubbles up from the poor and middle class.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
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## Economic Stability Talking Points: Liberal

1. People don't always act rationally, firms don't always act responsibly, and unexpected events can't be predicted. Luckily, government in fair-market capitalism makes impartial and wise decisions and acts on our behalf. With sensible regulations, it keeps all the players in capitalism transparent with accountability, ensuring that we have a stable, equitable economy that works for everyone. When the economy spins out of control, the government alleviates the immediate suffering and guides us to safety.
2. Capitalism is by far the best economic system for creating prosperity, but only when it is managed by a democratically elected government. During times of economic busts, government is prepared to take the wheel. It pumps more money into the pockets of the poor and the middle class. Once they start spending, demand picks up, firms start hiring, and wealth bubbles up. Crisis averted. During booms, it responsibly taps the brakes in an overheated economy and slows us down so that people don't get hurt.
3. Conservatives, your tax cuts on the rich, cuts to government assistance programs, and shrinking money supply only make the rich richer while squeezing the middle class and abandoning the poor. Your trickle-down approach runs dry long before wealth ever reaches the middle class or poor. The rich aren't the drivers of the economy; it's the poor and middle class whose demand drives our economy and motivates firms to produce. Demand creates supply, not the other way around.
4. Because conservatives have an irrational dislike of government, they actually cause crises. They repeal perfectly sensible and helpful regulations. Firms have no accountability, and their reckless behaviors lead to speculation and business practices that hurt society. Then they corner the government into cleaning up their messes. Thanks to free-market capitalism's irresponsible policies, we get firms that are too big to fail. The economy careens from booms to busts, and the nation is prevented from reaching its potential.
5. Radicals, in times of crisis, it makes sense to give people public-sector jobs, but when the economy is on an even keel or overheating, your federal jobs guarantee requires astronomically high taxes that demotivate entrepreneurs. Government must keep its legions of jobs-guaranteed employees working, but unlike firms, it doesn't have to be profitable, so it drives existing firms under and becomes everyone's employer. Instead of being a trusted partner, government now controls every aspect of our lives.
6. Radical public banks are run by community councils made up of stakeholders who have no idea what they're doing. Bad decisions are inevitable because the experts are outvoted. Then public banks impulsively flood the economy with too much money during downturns, and they fail to pull back when the economy overheats. Without a reasonable hierarchical process to make sound financial decisions, the monetary system is destined to implode. Nothing but misery ripples out from democratic socialism.
7. We benefit from having a nimble government that acts wisely when the unexpected occurs. To heat up the economy, it increases spending on jobs programs and unemployment benefits and cuts income taxes on the middle class and poor. At the same time, the Fed sets a lower target for interest rates and increases the money supply. To cool off the economy, it does the opposite. Whichever way the economy tips, government brings it back into balance. This means we can all sleep well at night.
8. An economic crisis might self-correct in the long run, but as Keynes said, we're all dead in the long run. If we can do something now to alleviate suffering, we should. Stabilization policies put money in or pull money out of the wallets of society's principal demanders. Consumer demand motivates firms to supply and hire workers, and therefore consumers are the real job creators. Because the poor and middle class fuel demand, wealth bubbles up from them to the rest of society.

# Conservative

Free-Market Capitalism



Economic  
Stability

## BIG PICTURE

Relying on price signals and a restricted role for government, we ride out the storms and let the economy get itself back on track so that the nation can continue to prosper.

## POLICY POSITION

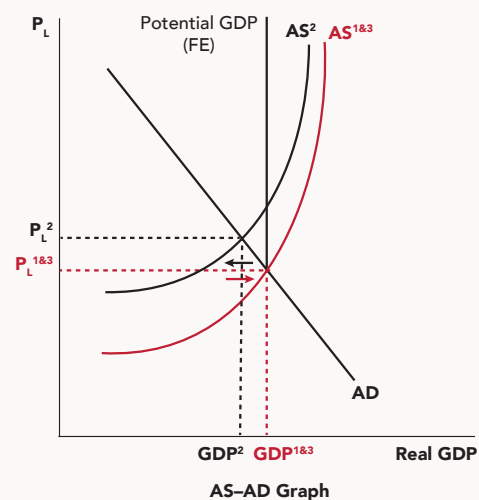
Inflation and unemployment undermine the well-being of society, but . . .

- ▶ Radical policies guarantee tyranny of the masses, a government with too much power, community councils that make the worst decisions, and an economy in a constant state of bust.
- ▶ Liberal policies punish job creators with high taxes and costly regulations, manipulate the money supply, and send the wrong price signals, making it impossible for the economy to find a stable footing.

## SOLUTION

Reject Keynesian economics and replace it with supply-side economics to ensure stable prices and full employment:

- Use government to get rid of government.
- Wealth trickles down from the job creators.



- Talking Points Rules:**
- Say these aloud to someone else.
  - Say them with conviction and passion, even if you disagree.
  - Please avoid mockery and sarcasm.

## Economic Stability Talking Points: Conservative

1. Free-market capitalism self-adjusts to bring about a stable economy. No matter where the economy is on the business cycle, and no matter what causes an economic crisis, we don't have to worry about economic surges and crashes because the economy is always guided by price signals. They are always fair and impartial—no one controls them—and they work equally for the benefit of all by bringing us the products and jobs that form the foundation of a good life.
2. We liberate businesses to bring us the material well-being that free-market capitalism promises. Wealth trickles down, and we all flourish. It makes logical sense that supply creates demand. After all, you can't do much demanding if you don't have a job. The system works, but first we have to get government out of the way. Then we can create the right conditions for firms to be profitable. The foundation of a stable economy is a business-friendly environment.
3. Radicals, your federal jobs guarantee might be designed as a backup to keep unemployment numbers down, but it quickly becomes everyone's first-choice employer. Why? Because even if a worker does a terrible job, makes something no one wants, and barely shows up for work, it doesn't matter. They still collect their paycheck at the end of the week. Your ripple-out approach may have started with good intentions, but those ripples don't go anywhere; they slam into a wall of apathy.
4. The core problem with democratic socialism is that when government takes over, it interferes with price signals and we're left stumbling around in the dark. A community council in a room somewhere decides what products will be produced, what jobs people will have, and what the money supply should be. If a few of their decisions turn out to be helpful, it's just dumb luck. Even a broken clock is correct twice a day. And with so much power in the hands of a few, corruption is inevitable.
5. Liberals, the bubbles from your bubble-up approach are the last sign of a drowning economy. Keynesian policy is shorthand for "tax more, spend more, and regulate more," and longhand for "pain." You foolishly raise taxes on job creators and impose arbitrary and costly regulations. When those misguided attempts to turn the economy around inevitably fail, we end up with a toxic combination of unemployment and inflation. It's as if you go out of your way to make it impossible for the economy to get back on its feet.
6. When the economy is in crisis, liberals muck around with the money supply. When it overheats, they close their wallets and cause unemployment. When it's in a downturn, they throw money around like it's confetti on New Year's Eve, and we end up with inflation. How can they possibly believe that printing money could ever be a solution, when no one is producing anything? Every time liberals interfere, whether it's with the money supply or taxes or regulating the way firms do business, they make things worse.
7. If you're caught in a riptide, instead of fighting the current, let yourself be carried back to safety. This is also what we do when the economy hits a rough patch. Whether the crisis is human-caused or a natural occurrence, trust free-market capitalism to bring us safely back to potential. But this only happens when we actively remove government interference by cutting taxes and regulations, and by constraining the money supply. Then wealth trickles down, and the invisible hand carries us back to potential.
8. When unexpected events affect the economy, in the short time that it takes free-market capitalism to self-correct, charitable giving is the bridge that helps people continue to thrive. Philanthropy enables us to express our values and take care of our communities as we choose, and we have more money to give because it's not siphoned off in taxes. Government serves us well when limited to three functions: to secure our property rights, to ensure our national defense, and to build the infrastructure that makes commerce possible.