



January 20, 2025

SENT VIA U.S. MAIL

Donald Trump
c/o Office Of The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

Independent Women, a leading national women's organization, wishes to congratulate you on your election and inauguration. We hope to have a positive working relationship with you, your advisors, and your administration officials.

Independent Women's mission is to develop and advance policies that enhance people's opportunities and well-being. We are particularly concerned about restoring women's opportunities and well-being. Here are a few specific policy ideas that we believe your administration should champion:

Putting America First: America still stands as the world's most powerful country, a global force for shaping a world order that prizes liberty and human dignity. But the 21st century has seen **proliferating threats by despots, terrorist groups, and other bad actors**. The greatest threat today comes from an increasingly totalitarian and aggressive **China**, allied with such predatory tyrannies as **Russia**, Iran, and North Korea. In standing up to these threats, America is mounting a vital defense of our own freedom and security and the future of a civilized and peaceful world order.

Rebuilding the Military and Defense Industry: The Department of Defense **must refocus** on the warfighter, prioritizing lethality, readiness, and accountability to ensure **America's military** remains the preeminent global fighting force. The men and women who defend our nation deserve equipment, training, and leadership designed to win

wars—not to be distracted by bureaucratic inefficiencies or diluted priorities. Lethality is the core mission of our armed forces; without it, we risk compromising national security, deterring aggression, and protecting American interests. Simultaneously, the defense industrial base requires a transformative overhaul. We must revitalize and expand this critical sector to meet the challenges of modern warfare, ensuring that innovation thrives while essential capabilities and resources are retained within the United States. Reshoring our defense manufacturing industry is a matter of national survival. Dependence on foreign suppliers for critical materials and systems weakens our ability to respond rapidly and decisively in crises.

Standing With Women: American law has long prohibited unfair sex discrimination without erasing legitimate differences between males and females or requiring that men and women be treated exactly the same in all circumstances. Unfortunately, the movement today to erase sex differences and equate “sex” and “gender” synonyms threatens to strip away important protections and programs for women and girls and open the door to unintended harms and inequities. **We oppose all efforts to erase legal distinctions** between males and females.

Keeping Taxes Low for American Families: The **2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act** delivered historic tax relief to businesses that spurred economic growth and investment. Not only did middle-class families enjoy \$1,500 to \$3,000 in tax savings, but popular tax provisions were expanded giving households more financial padding in their budgets and simplifying their taxes. Workers also benefitted from corporations passing along their corporate tax cuts through one-time bonuses, pay increases, and new benefits such as paid leave. At a time when households are dealing with four years of inflation, we must make permanent expiring tax provisions and build on tax relief for American enterprises.

Securing the Border: The United States is home to more immigrants than any country in the world. But, like any sovereign country, the U.S. **must control its borders**. Strong borders help ensure that the U.S. can continue to welcome people who arrive here legally while being fair to both immigrants and U.S. citizens. **Border security** is not just about

safeguarding a line on a map—it is about protecting the sovereignty of our nation, ensuring the safety of our citizens, and preserving the rule of law that underpins our democracy. A secure border prevents the exploitation of our immigration system by criminal cartels, human traffickers, and those who seek to harm our communities. It upholds our ability to welcome immigrants through lawful and orderly processes, honoring the legacy of those who have built this nation while prioritizing the security of those who call it home. A strong border is a cornerstone of national security, economic stability, and the American promise of safety and opportunity for all.

Promoting Energy Abundance: The United States has led the world in energy development that welcomes innovation to address challenges, including climate change. We should continue to take a **balanced approach to energy development** that isn't at odds with environmental stewardship while ensuring our country has access to reliable and affordable energy. We should flee from overly aggressive policies, like net-zero directives, that raise energy costs—such as restricting natural gas development and delivery—which, in addition to destroying good jobs for thousands of Americans, make America more dependent on foreign oil.

Preserving Workplace Flexibility: Millions of Americans—particularly women, caregivers, the elderly, and people with disabilities—don't want or cannot engage in a traditional, full-time employment relationship. Many of these workers prefer the opportunity to earn money as **independent contractors**, direct sellers, or entrepreneurs. We should promote policies that advance **workplace flexibility** and reject proposals that attempt to force workers back into 9-to-5 work relationships. We urge the incoming administration to overturn the new standard imposed by the Biden administration determining worker status under federal law that places flexible work at risk.

Portable Benefits: Self-employed professionals, freelancers, and gig workers who desire benefits must be able to secure them without losing their independent status. **Portable benefits** offer an avenue to untether access to benefits, such as health care and retirement, from employers and allow workers to carry those benefits with them

wherever they go. We must reform federal laws to allow companies to offer portable benefits to their independent workforce.

Expanding Access to Earned Leave: Americans want to provide working parents with the support they need to balance work and caregiving responsibilities. Independent Women has serious concerns about any proposal that drastically expands the government's role in paid leave, as this approach will disrupt existing work arrangements, burden taxpayers, and disadvantage low-income workers. Independent Women has been a thought leader in developing and advancing alternative policy solutions that expand paid leave in a fair and flexible way. Specifically, we should give workers access to the **Social Security benefits** they have earned after the birth and adoption of a child (in exchange for delayed future benefits) to provide help for those who need it most—while minimizing economic disruption and preserving flexibility and incentives for private paid leave.

Protect Women in Prison: Incarcerated women's safety while they pay their debt to society matters, and female prisoners should not be subject to violence and dignity violations from male prisoners claiming to be female, as is **currently happening with increasing frequency across the country**, both in state and federal prisons. We urge you to clarify federal law and regulations to ensure that only females may be housed in women's prisons, and prevent the transfer of male inmates, disproportionately sex offenders, to women's prisons on the basis of "gender identity."

Ensuring Healthcare Price Transparency: You were a leader during your first term in enhancing competition and transparency in health care, putting patients first—giving them more and better choices at more affordable prices in a robust private market. We urge you to continue and expand this leadership, as it's sorely needed. Under current government rules, hospitals are required to **post all upfront prices online** and health insurance companies and employer plans **must publicly post** all actual negotiated prices systemwide under the Transparency in Coverage rule. Moreover, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 requires that insurance companies and brokers reveal all historical claims data and broker fees and eliminate

gag clauses. Hospitals must not surprise patients with bills after insurance companies refuse to pay more. Yet these regulations are rarely followed. Only 36% of hospitals fully comply with transparency rules, according to a recent PatientRightsAdvocate.org **compliance report**. The Department of Health and Human Services **only assessed 14 penalties** against noncompliant hospitals, and the penalties they charged were de minimis relative to the operations of these medical giants.

Addressing Runaway Costs of Living: Deregulation and right-sizing government to bring spending down will be integral to bringing down the inflation rate and lowering costs for Americans, as well as reducing the debt and deficit. The administration and Congress must prioritize unwinding large spending bills, like the deceptively named Inflation Reduction Act, that did all but reduce **inflation**—especially for energy costs. Domestic energy exploration will also bring down everyday costs as **oil prices** feed into the costs of manufacturing, production, and transportation of goods and services.

Enhancing Education Freedom: Our educational institutions should put students and families in control. Prolonged school closures disastrously harmed students, and have demonstrated that **all families need education freedom and choice**—not just those who can afford expensive private school tuition. The federal government should prioritize sending **power and resources back to the states**, freeing states from counterproductive guidance on issues from school discipline to curriculum content, and encourage our school systems to pursue real innovation and instill civic values in all American students.

Addressing College Costs: Student loan debt is a real problem for millions of Americans. We should be looking to **hold universities accountable for their rising costs** and sometimes-predatory behavior, which is encouraged by the government's student loan programs.

Expanding Access to In-Home Caregiving: America has a caregiver problem. Americans overwhelmingly want the federal government to find ways to help families struggling to afford the high costs of child care and elder care. The question is how to help. **Expanding the**

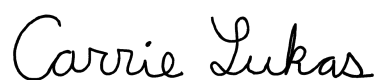
existing au pair program to include elderly care is one simple way to enable more senior citizens to receive the support they need to age in place. Furthermore, an **American Caregiver Program** replicating the au pair program infrastructure to provide U.S. citizens and residents with similar live-in work opportunities, would increase the supply of caregivers even more and enable more families and seniors to find and afford the help they need. Importantly, a new American Caregiver program and expanding the current au pair program would cost the government and American taxpayers close to nothing.

Restoring Trust in Government: Americans are concerned that too many of our federal agencies—from the Department of Justice and the FBI to the Department of Education, the IRS, and FEMA—are using their power to reward some political interests and to punish others. This is profoundly problematic and leads many Americans to mistrust their government. This must change immediately. This administration should demand transparency and accountability from all agencies and ensure that “equality under the law” prevails once again. The Trump administration should also seek to restore balance so that federal workers are held to the same standards as all other American workers, and that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and not wasted by a bloated, politicized bureaucracy.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss any of these issues with members of your administration. We are dedicated to engaging in respectful public discourse about policies with you and with all Americans who wish to join us in the great debate about the best path forward for our great country.

We wish you a successful presidency.

Sincerely,



Carrie Lukas
President
Independent Women