

U.S. Politics Simplified

by Ken Larsen last updated: 3:59 PM November 11, 2018

Here's my understanding of the differences between Democrats and Trump-era Republicans. I've tried to place the most significant and controversial topics higher in the table. I welcome feedback ... both on the content and on my ranking of the topics.

Except where indicated, I favor the Democratic side of each topic. By rough count, this makes me 79% Democrat, 14% Republican, and 7% independent [don't like Democratic or Republicans stance].

#	Topic	Democrats	Trump-era Republicans
1	Illegal immigrants [1]	<p>Providing sanctuary cities, free education and health services, and cossetting "Dreamers"</p> <p>This generosity only encourages more illegal immigration. It is a flagrant flouting of our laws and over-populating the country.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a border wall along Mexico border. [Sounds great, but it'll cost \$ 30B and will take about 15 years to build.] Believes that a system needs to be in place to ensure that immigrants who enter this country illegally are not provided with the same benefits that legal citizens are. This includes their children. Republicans assert that Democrats are not doing enough to stop illegal immigration. They contend that Democrats don't intend to do anything because they see illegals as Democratic voters. Trump wants "citizenship status" added to 2020 census. <p>[Ken: Except for the border wall, I strongly favor the Republican side of this topic.]</p>
2	Gun control [2]	yes	No. "Will not allow a repeal of the 2 nd Amendment." – Trump's response to a N.Y. Times Op-ed by former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens.
3	Healthcare	Cover everyone	Subsidizing healthcare is not the responsibility of the Federal government.
4	Planned Parenthood [3]	for	<p>Against. [4]</p> <p>Planned Parenthood gets \$528M/year from the Federal government. Republicans want all of that removed because some of Planned Parenthood expenses go towards funding abortions. The rest of Planned Parenthood is about providing health services and reproductive education.</p>
5	Education	Government subsidizes college for low income people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the Federal funding for education Get rid of federal school loans (only have private loans) Supports school choice and home schooling No government subsidizes for college Use public K-12 money to subsidize private schools via vouchers Expand the charter school program [5] Believes in an "English-first" approach to education [6] For more, see this
6	Social security program	Preserve	<p>Reduce [7]</p> <p>[Ken: Because people are living longer, I'm leaning Republican on this topic.]</p>
7	Medicare program	Preserve	<p>Reduce [7] [8]</p> <p>[Ken: Because people are living longer, I'm leaning Republican on this topic.]</p>
8	Income taxes	Progressive (favors poor)	Reduce + Flat rate (favors wealthy) [9] [10]
9	EPA/environment	for	<p>For Republicans, jobs take priority over the environment. They regard the EPA as a "bloated organization" that needs to be significantly reduced in size.</p> <p>In my home state of North Carolina, Republicans have pursued bills to support fracking, off-shore drilling, building close to waterways, and loosening regulations on landfills. These all have deleterious effects on the environment.</p>
10	Green energy	Supports wind and solar	Supports oil, gas, and coal. Trump administration intends to open nearly all U.S. offshore waters to drilling (January 4, 2018) ... except for Florida ...

			which is where he has an estate. Trump slaps huge tariff on imported solar panels. This is a huge blow to renewable energy.
11	Electoral reform	yes	No (used gerrymandering to gain political advantage in recent elections)
12	Religion		Against atheism Against Muslims
13	Support LBGTQ issues?	Yes	No (against same-sex marriage)
14	Syrian refugees entering U.S.	for	Against [11] [Ken: I lean Republican on this topic for the reasons cited in my footnote.]
14	Foreign policy		Believes in an active US role overseas – economically, militarily, and diplomatically.
15	Military expansion	against	for
16	Free trade	Supports free trade. This causes job loss, but reduces the cost of goods.	Do not support free trade (America first!) [12]
17	Regulation of Wall Street	for	against
18	Criminal justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeal the federal ban on marijuana • Against the death penalty • Sociology and rehabilitation are worthwhile expenditures to reduce crime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict enforcement of drug laws • For the death penalty • Don't want to spend a dime understanding/studying why people become criminals or rehabilitating them ... just lock them up.
19	Abortion [3]	for	Against. Republicans regard abortion as murder.
20	Believes in Global warming?	yes	No
21	Science	Darwinism	Creationism
22	Reduce national debt	Both parties ignore the national debt. This will lead to inflation. [13] [Ken: I'm against both parties on this topic.]	
23	Fracking	against	for
24	Stimulus policies	Both parties favor growth.	
25	Affirmative action	for	against
26	National Parks		Trump's budget cuts \$ 300M from the National Parks Service and triples entrance fees . Yosemite and Grand Canyon will now cost \$70/vehicle. Daily fees are a regressive tax.
27	Internet neutrality	for	against
28	United Nations (U.N.)	for	Against (wants to defund it)
29	Regulations	Recognizes that regulations are needed to protect the environment, to protect society, etc.	Anti-regulatory attitude They believe that regulations are bad for the economy. In reality, this behavior is part of their objective to make the rich richer.
30	Israel	Both parties support giving Israel \$ 3.8B/year in military aid. [Ken: I'm against both parties on this topic.]	

Footnotes

[1] There are an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. Most are in big cities in blue (Democratic) states. The only state that is not is Texas. It is alleged that *Parkland Memorial hospital in Dallas gives birth to about 16,000 babies each year. 70% of the mothers are illegals. By law, pregnant women cannot be denied medical care based on their immigration status or ability to pay. Because these women are illegal immigrants, they do not have to provide any*

sort of legitimate identification - no proof of income. An American citizen would have to provide a social security number which would reveal their annual income - an illegal immigrant need only claim to be poor and the hospital must take them at their word. Also, the illegals only speak Spanish, so the hospital has to have interpreters. Bottom line: Illegal immigrants are being treated better than legal citizens. This is not right.

[2] In my opinion, the NRA's tax exempt status should be revoked. [\[details\]](#)

[3] World population is exploding. [\[details\]](#) Strong steps MUST be taken to address this problem.

[4] One Republican that I know asserts that Planned Parenthood is far worse than the NRA. She said "Planned Parenthood performs around 340,000 "deaths" by abortion a year, so they are much worse than the NRA. And the NRA doesn't kill, law abiding gun owners don't kill, seriously disturbed people (usually with "street" guns) do. Also, there are more gun deaths by far in areas with the strictest gun laws (ie. Chicago)."

[5] In North Carolina, charter schools have been used as a devious way to racially discriminate. Charter School began around 2003 with the intent to serve as an incubator for new ideas to help disadvantaged children ... like those with discipline problems. In recent years, Republicans have morphed Charter schools into a segregation tool. They have passed laws which mandate that when a child transfers from a public school to a charter school, the full average state funding for that child passes along to the charter school. This is not fair, because a charter school has far fewer expenses than a public school. They don't have to provide meals. They don't have to provide special education. They don't have to provide transportation. Without transportation, low income people don't enroll their children in charter schools, because they can't afford to drive their children to and from school every day. The net is that charter schools have proportionately more white students. The few black students that they have are the wealthier ones. The public schools are left with all the special needs children. They cost more to educate, because special teachers are needed.

[6] This makes sense, because providing dual-language programs drives up the cost of education. Where do you draw the line? In my home of Chapel Hill, NC there are both Spanish and Mandarin dual language programs. Would we have to provide an Arabic program if there were an influx of Arabs?

[7] Social security was signed into law in 1935. The average life expectancy in that year was 61. Now it's 79. That's a huge increase. Because of that increase, the starting age for social security should be raised. Otherwise, our national debt will rise significantly. An alternative is to reduce the benefits. Because of this issue, I favor the Republican stance.

[8] Republicans assert that Medicare is overrun with fraudulent disability claims, and that Democrats are not doing enough to crack down on this.

[9] Support for a flat rate tax explains more clearly than anything that Trump-Republicans are all about the wealthy. Back when Eisenhower was president, the highest marginal tax rate was 90%. Republicans since then have been chiseling away at that ... while at the same time increasing regressive taxes (like sales taxes) ***which punish the poor. A flat rate income tax for all + many loop holes for the rich + plus sales taxes ends up taxing the poor proportionately more than the rich!***

[10] The Tennessee constitution forbids income taxes. As a consequence, they have high sales taxes ... over 9%. They intend to raise this to 10.25% by 2023 to pay for light rail in Nashville. Sales taxes are a regressive tax that hurts low income people more than rich.

[11] I have negative feelings about allowing Syrian refugees into the U.S. My main qualm is that they won't integrate well. Many don't speak English. From what I understand, Muslims don't value education for women, they don't tolerate

LGBT issues, they don't tolerate atheism, they don't tolerate Muslims giving up their religion, they abhor alcohol, they resent western dress for women, and they don't like our materialistic/hedonistic lifestyle. All of these views will likely increase the likelihood that their children will be bullied and problems will result. Before any Muslim refugees migrate to the U.S., I recommend that they be counseled on the cultural differences. They may elect to stay away ... to protect their children. For more on what Muslims think of Western society, see <http://www.missionislam.com/family/culture.htm>

[12] Slapping tariffs on foreign countries will drive up the cost of goods ... like solar panels and steel. A rise in the cost of steel will hurt the building industry.

[13] The biggest criticism that I have against the Democratic Party is that they are not fiscally responsible. They are prone to supporting social programs without regard to the long term financial consequences. One strong local example for me is the Durham-Orange Light Rail Project (DOLRT). For a multiplicity of reasons that I document [here](#), it is a boondoggle, yet the local Democrats tenaciously defend it and refuse to budge.

What has happened to the Republican Party?

The current Trump-era Republican Party is not the Republican Party of Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Dwight Eisenhower. Those presidents gave honor to the Republican Party ... truly establishing it as the GOP ... "Grand Old Party" with the emphasis on the word "Grand". They cared about people ... rich and poor. They cared about the environment. They cared about the country.

To be blunt, the Trump-era Republicans are a bunch of con artists who have hijacked the grand image of the GOP and used it serve special interests.

In a similar manner, Trump-era Republicans have hijacked the good image of the Christian religion and used it for the same selfish reasons. I don't think Trump and his cronies actually believe in God and the tenets of Christianity. They just want voters to believe that they are pious so that they'll vote Republican. It's a brilliant maneuver that has been enormously successful for the Republican Party.

Using tools such as Fox News, Republicans have successfully duped millions of voters. Fox News is nothing more than a propaganda machine to extol the con-artists and belittle their opposition. My message to those voters is: "Wake up. You have been conned."

[Fourteen Propaganda Techniques that Fox News Used to Brainwash Americans](#)

[\[examples of Fox News propaganda\]](#)