

Education And Health POLICY STATEMENT - National Grange 2015

Education:

A quality education opens minds to new possibilities and encourages students to think for themselves. While the Grange commends those who have followed the traditional path for higher education, we need to encourage those who fall outside the term “traditional student” to look at the educational opportunities available offered by vocational or trade schools or other nontraditional degree programs to expand their personal and professional lives. The purpose of education is to open the minds of young people to the world around them, to the lesson of the past, and the possibilities of the future. An understanding of the past is a part of education that is too often neglected. These important facts are even more powerful and useful when an understanding of their context and background are taught. The Grange will continue to promote the teaching of American Civics in our educational system. One of the core values of the Grange is the right to free expression and the respect of differing opinions. We especially see these as relevant in educational institutions.

We believe we must have a partnership between Federal, State and Local officials who all have a seat at the table when it comes to educating our children. Parents must be an essential part of the decision-making process. The National Grange encourages the teaching of patriotism and financial literacy as a major point of education if we are to see productive, prepared, responsible citizens and future elected officials, while contributing to our local and national economy.

The National Grange offers its continued support of OCRE (Organizations Concerned about Rural Education), the National School Board Associations and other educational associations as well as supporting the efforts to reduce the pupil to teacher ratio at all levels of education through 12th grade. The National Grange supports the idea of more study in regards to Common Core to determine the educational benefits.

The Grange urges educators at the primary, secondary and undergraduate levels to include basic knowledge of agriculture in their curriculum. Agriculture is man’s basic interaction with the environment. Every farmer learns to adapt and work with nature in order to be successful. The most simple and basic lesson, such as water is needed to grow crops, is critical for every American to understand.

The National Grange supports legislation requiring education on prevention and handling of bullying of adults and children to be administered by employers and schools.

We strongly encourage Grange members nationwide to play an active role in their local school systems and communities. It is essential for our members to invest in our children’s education through volunteering. Some examples of this are the donation of school supplies (such as the Words for Thirds dictionary program) and exposure to volunteerism and community service. These contributions will help us remain positive role models for school children and increase the awareness of our organization.

The National Grange encourages individuals to become educated consumers. Consumers, using modern technology, should research their purchasing and borrowing options carefully and make decisions that positively benefit their future and that of their community. The National Grange renews its historical commitment to free primary and secondary education, affordable

higher education and support of the arts, music and athletics, recognizing their value in elevating the standard of social and intellectual life.

Health:

It is important that each of us take responsibility for our own health. The National Grange continues to support efforts to target the epidemic of childhood obesity, to return responsibility to the local communities to develop their own guidelines and to seek waivers on requirements that would allow farm to table produce and products to be fed to our children. We would recommend and encourage that the guidelines include healthy lunches, choice of milk and flavored milks, increased physical activity and limited access to soda and snack machines.

The National Grange supports the efforts of legislation to include cost effective, early intervention medical care to be covered by private and public insurance programs.

The National Grange encourages all American to be mindful of the opioid crises that is sweeping American with a strong concentration in rural areas of our country.

The National Grange encourages all Americans to be mindful of prescription drug safety. Educational information should be provided by the prescribing physician, as well as by their pharmacists. We believe the information available through the FDA and the DEA should be provided to patients to give an unbiased opinion of the medication. Patients should be allowed to purchase their prescription from whatever reliable source they choose. The National Grange insists that all prescriptions drugs purchased from within the boundaries of the United States should meet or exceed the standards of the FDA and the DEA. Increased efforts must be made for the continuing education of Medicare recipients on the benefits available to them through Medicare.

The National Grange continues to support the prescription disposal program, while encouraging local Granges to get training and to take part in this program in their own local communities.

While not all products that enter the United States can realistically be tested to determine if they are defective or contaminated, we encourage government agencies and consumer safety advocates to be diligent in safety inspection on imported products. The National Grange requests that all products sold in the United States be labeled with the country of origin.

National Grange urges its members to be diligent in their communications with their legislators to continue the cost of living increases to Social Security recipients.

The National Grange should have a commitment to quality healthcare for all. We encourage Congress to look for areas of common ground to continue to reform health care. We support further research and potential coverage by insurance or Medicare/Medicaid for alternative therapies for medical conditions such as acupuncture for pain management.

We support paid maternity leave, working with businesses to build a comprehensive policy that benefits both the employee and employer.

National Grange Growth and Development Policy Statement 2015

The growth of our Granges and the development of our members are vital to continued existence and future of the Grange. These goals are intertwined. Without continued development in leadership and programming the Grange will not grow, nor possess, the experience to face future challenges. We have the knowledge to address these problems and achieve these goals. We must keep our attitudes positive and unified as we work together as a team to develop programming that will mold today's leaders and those of tomorrow.

A true leader should recognize they are to serve the membership and not seek the position but rather let the position seek the person. Every leader in the Grange should strive to build a cohesive team to lead the Grange in the pathway to success.

In today's ever changing world, Granges, at all levels, should strive to create new ways to encourage all members to be involved in the Grange process. Granges should also be encouraged to remind their officers regularly of the duties with which they were charged during the installation ceremony and provide them with the mentoring and tools to accomplish these tasks. Granges should also be encouraged to think outside the box, and not be afraid of change that will provide opportunities to create leadership and membership development.

While Granges should strive to look ahead, we shall not forget to pause and remember our vast accomplishments that have benefited American life for the past 148 years. In recognition of the Granges involvement in Rural Free Delivery, we recommend that the National Grange develop a certificate program commemorating the Granges involvement with this major achievement in rural American life.

The National Grange should research and pursue appropriate national publications, such as the "World Almanac and Book of Facts" to promote the Grange as America's oldest agricultural fraternal organization.

In an effort to help address Grange real estate issues, we recommend the National Grange develop programs to help guide our Granges in appropriate property management practices to better manage our Grange properties.

The Grange will only succeed and grow with the proper attitude and hard work of its members. We must remember to have pride in our organization. We must continue to review our programming and update it as needed. We cannot cling to outdated ideals or programming that holds us from growth. With the assistance, teaching, and respect of veteran members, we are able to train and develop our members who will one day be the officers, delegates and leaders of the Order. This is our future and it is our responsibility to ensure that it endures forever.