What the Women's March Stands For

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Affordable birth control. Equal pay for equal work. Full access to health care for transgender Americans.

As recently as last summer, these seemed like achievable goals, backed by President Barack Obama and championed by Hillary Clinton. Now, of course, Donald Trump is president, and what might have been items on Mrs. Clinton's agenda are tenets of the Women's March on Washington, a protest to mark Mr. Trump's second day in office.

More than 200,000 people have signed up on Facebook to attend the Washington march, and over 1.5 million plan to attend one of hundreds of satellite marches around the country.

Last week, the protest organizers released a platform of their principles, developed by a group of contributors that include Alicia Garza, one of the founders of the Black Lives Matter movement; the author and transgender rights advocate Janet Mock; and Terry O'Neill, the president of the National Organization for Women.

The platform calls for a broad range of reforms to address not only gender inequity but also racial and economic inequality. It supports paid family leave; anti-discrimination protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans; access to affordable reproductive health care, including contraception and abortion; an end to the use of military-style weapons and tactics by the police in minority communities; a living minimum wage; immigration reform, with a path to citizenship; and protection of the environment and public lands.

None of these goals are particularly radical. Most appeared in some form in the platform adopted by the Democratic National Committee at the party convention in July. That such mainstream proposals -- to improve safety-net programs, protect constitutional rights and promote broad-based prosperity -- are the subject of a protest manifesto is a measure of how much the political debate has changed in the last few months.

President Trump is unlikely to read the march platform, let alone heed it. But the document is a valuable reminder of what once seemed possible and still could be realized. Among the groups sponsoring the march is Emily's List, which supports female Democratic candidates at the local, state and federal levels. The day after the march, the group will hold a training session in Washington for women interested in running for office. Maybe the march will not only demonstrate support for ideals that are out of favor with the new administration but also inspire more people to enter political life.

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