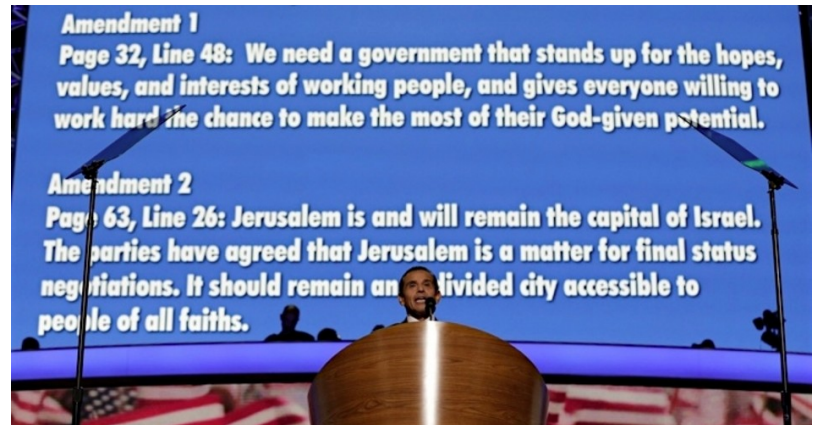




Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on September 6, 2012

## Democrats Reinstate God, Jerusalem into Party Platform

Following some contentious negotiations and a vote that seemed to be anything but unanimous, the Democratic Party placed God back in its platform at the party convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, September 5. The voice vote, which convention chairman Antonio Villaraigosa had to call three times because of intense divisions between delegates, also acknowledged Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, a move that rankled the party's many pro-Arab members.



The changes move the Democratic Party platform back to its language of 2008 on the two issues, reading: "We need a government that stands up for the hopes, values and interests of working people, and gives everyone willing to work hard the chance to make the most of their God-given potential." On the issue of Israel's capital, the platform now re-affirms: "Jerusalem is and will remain the capital of Israel. The parties have agreed that Jerusalem is a matter for final status negotiations. It should remain an undivided city accessible to people of all faiths."

According to David Brody of [CBN News](#), in 2004 the Democratic Party platform included "seven platform references to God. Then in 2008, there was only one mention stating how everyone had 'the chance to make the most of their God-given potential.'" And as the party's platform committee hammered out this year's language, the mention of God was excised completely, with the section reading simply: "In America, hard work should pay off, responsibility should be rewarded, and each one of us should be able to go as far as our talent and drive take us."

Someone in the Republican Party noticed the conspicuous absence of God, as well as the backing away from recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and by the morning of September 5 GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney and running mate Paul Ryan were making it a significant issue on the campaign trail. "I think their having removed purposefully God from their platform suggests a party that is increasingly out of touch with the mainstream of American people," Romney said. "I think this party is veering further and further away into an extreme wing that Americans don't recognize." Ryan called the move "rather peculiar" and "not in keeping with our founding documents, our founding vision."

As for his position on Israel, Romney said that "four years of President Obama's repeated attempts to create distance between the United States and our cherished ally have led the Democratic Party to remove from their platform an unequivocal acknowledgment of a simple reality. As president, I will restore our relationship with Israel and stand shoulder to shoulder with our close ally."

After the Democrats moved to reinstate the language affirming both God and Jerusalem, Romney spokeswoman Andrea Saul attempted to keep the controversy in play, noting that it was "unclear" which Democratic group had carried the voice vote on the changes, and calling on President Obama to "state in unequivocal terms whether or not he believes Jerusalem is Israel's capital."

According to the [Los Angeles Times](#), President Obama positioned himself as uncertain as to why the language was changed in the first place. "A Democratic official says the president was unhappy about the platform changes when he heard about them," reported the *Times*. "He told his staff to convey his



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opposition right away, which set the wheels in motion to reinstate.[]On the ‘God’ part, the official said, his response to hearing it was, ‘Why was it changed in the first place?’”

In a statement after the vote, a Democratic Party official insisted that the platform language was changed back in order to “maintain consistency with the personal views expressed by the president and in the Democratic Party platform in 2008.”

As for whether or not Obama still acknowledges Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, White House press secretary Jay Carney attempted to downplay the controversy caused by the temporary change.

“Obviously, we’ve heard some of the concerns expressed about it, but let’s be clear,” Carney declared.

“As president of the United States, the position on Jerusalem held by this administration, this president is exactly the same position that presidents and administrations have held since 1967.”

[Yahoo News](#) noted that U.S. law affirms Jerusalem as Israel’s capital “and calls for the United States Embassy there to leave Tel Aviv, where it is now. But it includes a presidential waiver authority, and Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama have all used that to forestall the change.” (Wikipedia’s article “[Positions on Jerusalem](#),” notes the status of the city under international law, as well as U.S. policy towards the city’s status.)

For the past several decades “Republican and Democratic administrations alike have said it is up to the Israelis and Palestinians to settle Jerusalem’s final status — a position reiterated earlier Wednesday by the White House,” reported the [Associated Press](#). “Both sides claim Jerusalem as their capital, and the city’s status has long been among the thorniest issues in Mideast peace talks.”

*Photo: Los Angeles Mayor and Democratic Convention Chairman Antonio Villaraigosa calls for a vote to amend the platform at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., on*

*Sept. 5, 2012: AP Images*



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