<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/13/clinton-progressive_n_7269788.html?1431517172>

WASHINGTON -- New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio (D) traveled more than 200 miles south on Tuesday to debut what he hopes will be a unifying progressive agenda for the upcoming presidential election.  
  
Formally known as "[The Progressive Agenda to Combat Income Inequality](http://progressiveagenda.us/agenda)," de Blasio's plan consists of 13 principles, largely addressing issues of family well-being and economic fairness.

"It's a marker for all current leaders and all aspirants to different offices to use as a way of addressing these issues," de Blasio told The Huffington Post in an interview Tuesday in Washington, shortly before he unveiled the platform on Capitol Hill. "We're putting forward a tangible set of things that can change the economic reality for millions and millions of Americans."

De Blasio's principles could prove a useful tool for holding Democratic candidates accountable if they start to drift philosophically during the 2016 campaign. But at this point, the candidates eyeing the nomination seem to be largely in step with the New York City mayor's vision.

Of those Democrats running or expected to run for president, de Blasio's agenda would seem to present the toughest challenge to former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Clinton, after all, bears the reputation of the centrist front-runner having her heels nipped at by lesser-known progressive rivals. And though de Blasio managed her 2000 Senate campaign in New York, he has not yet endorsed Clinton's presidential candidacy, saying he's waiting [to see her vision](http://www.politico.com/story/2015/05/bill-de-blasio-elizabeth-warren-hillary-clinton-2016-117837.html) of governance.

On Tuesday, however, de Blasio had only kind words for Clinton, saying he was "optimistic" so far about her direction on issues like [immigration](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/05/hillary-clinton-immigration-reform_n_7217768.html), [mass incarceration](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/29/hillary-clinton-mass-incarceration_n_7166970.htmltarget=)and income inequality.

"We're obviously only weeks into her campaign, but I think she's said some very positive things directly on income inequality -- in Iowa, certainly," de Blasio said. "I think we see a strong beginning from her as she fleshes out her vision."

Indeed, a closer look at de Blasio's progressive agenda further complicates the narrative that Clinton is out of step. HuffPost examined Clinton's position on each of the elements de Blasio's agenda, and found that she is philosophically supportive of all 13 of the principles. Where we couldn't find an answer, we noted it. When she comes up short, it's largely a matter of degree or because she hasn't made her current stance fully known (whether intentionally or not). There are places here where she may be vulnerable to attacks from her primary opponents, who have records with fewer blanks to fill in. But Clinton has her defenders when it comes to her progressivism, including at least one person who has signed onto de Blasio's platform.

"I wouldn't be in this process if I thought it was an attempt to move Hillary Clinton to the left," said former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean (D), a former presidential candidate who supports Clinton and has signed on to de Blasio's statement of principles. "I view this as a way of setting a marker for Democrats so they don't stray as the way they did in the year before I ran."

Reached for comment, Clinton's campaign declined to make any new policy pronouncements, citing a desire to stick to its own schedule. But her spokesman Brian Fallon sent over the following statement: "For her entire career, Hillary Clinton has championed many of the issues included in this contract. She has a long record of pushing for progress on issues like family leave, income inequality and education. She looks forward to continuing the conversation around these important topics as she lays out her own ideas over the coming months of the campaign."

A look at Clinton's position on each of de Blasio's agenda items:

**1. Raise the federal minimum wage to $15 per hour.** Clinton has called for raising the federal minimum wage, though she hasn't explicitly come out in favor of $15 an hour, as former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, a likely Democratic challenger, [has done](http://www.newrepublic.com/article/121569/martin-omalleys-15-minimum-wage-puts-hillary-notice). That said, though, the bill currently being pushed by Senate Democrats doesn't call for that level either, settling instead for $12.

**2. Reform the National Labor Relations Act to enhance workers' rights.**Clinton hasn't made statements on this issue recently, but in the past she has sponsored the Employee Free Choice Act, which would have expanded avenues for unionization. And in 2008, she pledged to make "pro-labor" nominations to the NLRB.

**3. Pass comprehensive immigration reform.** Clinton [basically stunned](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/05/hillary-clinton-immigration-reform_n_7217768.html)immigration advocates recently by going further than President Barack Obama on deportation relief. She supports comprehensive reform, too.

**4. Oppose trade deals that “move power to corporations at the expense of American jobs, workers’ rights, and the environment.”** This is probably the biggest TBD on the list. Clinton has avoided discussing the specifics of the trade deal currently being negotiated, but her past statements suggest she's [relatively in line with de Blasio](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/04/30/hillary-clinton-trans-pacific-partnership_n_7173108.html).

**5. Pass national paid sick leave.** Clinton has spoken out repeatedly in favor of paid sick leave policies, calling it "outrageous" that the United States doesn't have a guarantee for mothers of newborns and recently calling out the state of Pennsylvania for potentially [interfering with Philadelphia's paid sick leave law](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/06/paid-sick-days-clinton_n_7215274.html).

**6. Pass national paid family leave.** Clinton's [campaign launch video](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/11/hillary-clinton-paid-family-leave-mothers-day_n_7257370.html) showcased her advocacy for this policy.

**7. Make pre-K, after-school programs and child care universal.** In 2007, Clinton [unveiled a $5 billion plan](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/21/us/politics/21candidate.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&) to make child care universal and affordable, matched dollar for dollar by state funding. As first lady, she pushed for more federal funding for after-school programs. And Clinton's history of advocating for dramatic expansions of child care (Head Start, frequently) is too long to detail here.

**8. Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit.** The EITC was expanded under the 2009 stimulus and those expansions were extended through 2017 under the American Taxpayer Relief Act. Clinton hasn't offered an opinion on this recently. But in 2007, she called for expanding and simplifying the EITC.

**9. Allow students to refinance student loan debt.** Clinton has said she supports this measure, arguing that "the interest rates are still so low for most other debt and they’re still fixed at [too high a rate for student loans](http://genprogress.org/voices/2014/07/24/29357/hillary-clinton-says-student-debt-is-one-of-the-biggest-problems-we-have-right-now-in-the-country/).”

**10. Close the carried interest loophole.** She has said she wants to [close it](http://www.cnn.com/2015/04/16/politics/hillary-clinton-hedge-fund/).

**11. End tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas.** Clinton wants to [do this too](http://web.archive.org/web/20080528220608/http:/www.hillaryclinton.com/news/speech/view/?id=1839).

**12. Implement the "Buffett Rule" so millionaires pay their fair share.**Nothing notable from Clinton on this specific proposal (it came into being while she was at the State Department). But she supported raising the top-end Bush tax rates (which did get raised), and Buffett himself supports her candidacy.

**13. Closing the CEO tax loophole that allows corporations to take advantage of "performance pay" write-offs.** Again, it's pretty clear where Clinton stands. In April, she [wrote](http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/opinion/columnists/caucus/2015/04/27/clinton-iowans-great-ideas-better-future/26418849/) in The Des Moines Register: “Something is wrong when CEOs earn 300 times more than a typical American worker and hedge fund managers pay a lower tax rate than a truck driver or a nurse."

Now, there is a major caveat to all of this: Platforms are written in broad strokes, while governance is done with more precision. And a common critique of Clinton is that she might be more inclined to cut deals at odds with this progressive agenda, due to her proximity to Wall Street donors and the record compiled by her husband's administration.

Clinton's ability to fend off this skepticism could very well determine how serious a primary she actually has to grapple with in the coming year. Still, it's worth remembering that her real problem in 2008 was not her domestic agenda -- in fact, on some critical issues she struck decidedly more progressive notes than Obama -- but her hawkish foreign policy leanings.