

Traffic Safety Education Funding

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3 **WHEREAS** annually, more than 6,000 teens are killed on our nation’s highways;

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5 **WHEREAS** billions of dollars are lost in our nation’s economy due to “accidents” that could be
6 prevented if we had better-trained drivers;

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8 **WHEREAS** the Washington State Legislature, in the 1960s, enacted RCW 28A.220 in order “...to
9 provide the financial assistance necessary to enable each high school district to offer a course in
10 traffic safety education...” and sustained it for nearly forty years;

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12 **WHEREAS** the Washington State Legislature, enacted RCW 43.08.250 which created a funding
13 source for traffic safety education that was non-taxpayer based, called the Public Safety and
14 Education Account, which derives its revenue from traffic fines;

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16 **WHEREAS** in 2001 and 2002 the Washington State Legislature cut the funding for Traffic Safety
17 Education, while at the same time leaving the legislative mandates in place;

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19 **WHEREAS** due to the loss of funding, most public high schools have since outsourced or dropped
20 their Traffic Safety Education programs, while others have raised fees and cut the quality of the
21 program in order to sustain it;

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23 **WHEREAS** the consequent lack of access to an affordable public school program has adversely
24 impacted low-income families and students living in rural areas where private sector driver
25 education courses are either unavailable or too costly; and

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27 **WHEREAS** due to the lack of a publicly-funded course in Traffic Safety Education, many students
28 receive no driver education, and are driving illegally and/or waiting until age 18 to get their
29 license, creating a public-safety hazard as untrained drivers whose presence endangers the lives of
30 all who use our highways;

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32 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Party supports the
33 restoration of funding for Traffic Safety Education, and calls upon the Governor and the State
34 Legislature to include such funding in the state budget.
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37 Submitted by the Pierce County Democrats to the Democratic Central Committee for consideration
38 at its June 14 convention in Spokane. (Date Submitted 5/6/2008)

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40 The Resolutions Committee “AMENDED THIS RESOLUTION AND RECOMMENDED A PASS” at
41 its May 31, 2008 meeting in Ellensburg.

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43 The Washington State Democratic Convention “PASSED” this resolution at its June 14, 2008 meeting
44 in Spokane.
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