

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
6 could be 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
9 order "...to provide the financial assistance necessary to enable each high school district
10 to offer a course in 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
13 funding source for traffic safety education that was non-taxpayer based, called the
14 Public Safety and 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
17 Traffic Safety Education, while at the same time leaving the legislative mandates in
18 place;

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

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

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

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33 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Party supports
34 the restoration of funding for Traffic Safety Education, and calls upon the Governor and
35 the State Legislature to include such funding in the state budget.

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38 Submitted by the Pierce County Democrats to the Democratic Central Committee for
39 consideration at its June 14 convention in Spokane. (Date Submitted 5/6/2008)

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

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44 The Washington State Democratic Convention "PASSED" this resolution at its June 14,
45 2008 meeting in Spokane.