

Resolution for Employee Free Choice Act

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3 **WHEREAS** in 1935, the United States established, by law, that workers must be free to
4 form unions;

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6 **WHEREAS** the freedom to form or join a union is internationally recognized by the
7 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a fundamental human right;

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9 **WHEREAS** the free choice to join with others and bargain for better wages and benefits
10 is essential to economic opportunity and good living standards;

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12 **WHEREAS** unions benefit communities by strengthening living standards, stabilizing
13 tax bases, promoting equal treatment and enhancing civic participation;

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15 **WHEREAS** states in which more people are union members are states with higher
16 wages, better benefits and better schools;

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18 **WHEREAS** union workers receive better wages and benefits, with union workers
19 earning 29 percent more than workers without a union, 35 percent more likely to have
20 access to health insurance, and are four times more likely to have access to a guaranteed
21 defined-benefit pension;

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23 **WHEREAS** unions help raise workers' pay and narrow the income gap for minorities
24 and women, by increasing median weekly earnings by 31 percent for union women
25 workers, 31 percent for African-American workers, 50 percent for Latino workers, 9
26 percent for Asian American workers;

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28 **WHEREAS** workers across the nation are routinely denied the freedom to form unions
29 and bargain for a better life, with 25 percent of private-sector employers illegally firing
30 at least one worker for union activity during organizing campaigns;

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32 **WHEREAS** 77 percent of the public believes it is important to have strong laws
33 protecting the freedom for workers to make their own decision about having a union,
34 and 58 percent of successful campaigns;

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36 **WHEREAS** employers often refuse to bargain fairly with workers after forming a union
37 by dragging out first contract bargaining for up to two years in 45 percent of successful
38 campaigns;

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40 **WHEREAS** each year millions of dollars are spent to frustrate workers' efforts to form
41 unions, and most violations of workers' freedom to choose a union occur behind closed
42 doors, with 78 percent of employers forcing employees to attend mandatory anti-union
43 meetings;

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45 **WHEREAS** when the right of workers to form a union is violated, wages fall, race and
46 gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination increases and job safety standards
47 disappear;

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49 **WHEREAS** a worker's fundamental right to choose a union free from coercion and
50 intimidation is a public issue that requires public policy solutions, including legislative
51 remedies;

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53 **WHEREAS** the Employee Free Choice Act has been introduced in the U.S. Congress in
54 order to restore workers' freedom to join a union; and

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56 **WHEREAS** The Employee Free Choice Act will safeguard workers' ability to make their
57 own decisions with these abuses, provide for first contract mediation and arbitration,
58 and establish meaningful penalties when employers violate workers' rights.

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60 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the WSDCC supports the Employee Free Choice
61 Act, which would authorize the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union as the
62 bargaining representative when a majority of employees voluntarily sign authorizations
63 designating that union to represent them; provide for first contract mediation and
64 arbitration; and establish meaningful penalties for violations of a worker's freedom to
65 choose a union;

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67 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we urge Congress to pass the
68 Employee Free Choice Act to protect and preserve for America's workers their freedom
69 to choose for themselves whether or not to form a union; and

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71 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic
72 Central Committee forward this resolution to the Washington State Delegation to the
73 US Congress.

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76 Submitted by the Spokane County Democrats to the Democratic Central Committee for
77 consideration at its June 14 convention in Spokane. (Date Submitted 4/23/2008)

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

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

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85 The Washington State Democratic Convention "PASSED" this resolution at its June 14,
86 2008 meeting in Spokane.