

Resolution Protects the Freedom of American Workers to Form Unions and Bargain Collectively

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

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7 **WHEREAS**, the freedom to form unions is internationally recognized as a
8 fundamental human right guaranteed by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human
9 Rights; and

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11 **WHEREAS**, many U.S. workers who want to organize can not when more than 57
12 million say they would join a union now if they had the opportunity; and

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14 **WHEREAS**, employers routinely use legal as well as illegal tactics against workers
15 each year, threatening, coercing or firing employees that seek to form unions; and

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17 **WHEREAS**, more than 20,000 U.S. workers in organizing drives in 2004 were fired
18 or discriminated against for exercising their freedom to form unions, according to
19 National Labor Relations Board annual reports; and

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21 **WHEREAS**, in nearly half of private-sector union representation elections when
22 workers overcome these obstacles and vote to form a union, employers refuse to
23 agree to collective bargaining contracts two years after the election; and

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25 **WHEREAS**, workers who have unions not only gain a voice on the job, but earn 28%
26 more than workers without unions, on average, and are much more likely to have
27 health and pension benefits, according to the U.S. Department of Labor; and

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29 **WHEREAS**, collective bargaining is a public good that benefits our entire nation,
30 helping communities by strengthening tax bases and promoting a more just, equal,
31 and democratic society; and

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33 **WHEREAS**, for decades, a united labor movement, working closely with the
34 Democratic Party, has led the fight for every single legal and social reform that has
35 strengthened the economic, health and retirement security for America's workers
36 and their families; and

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38 **WHEREAS**, unions strengthen and build the middle class, with studies showing
39 that in the ten strongest union states there is less poverty, higher household income,
40 better schools and less crime, than in the ten weakest union states; and

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42 **WHEREAS**, declines in unionization have coincided with a growing gap between
43 the rich and the poor, which is bad for our economy and bad for democracy; and

44 **WHEREAS**, union members tend to be more politically engaged, educated about
45 issues that matter to working families, and motivated to vote – leading to policies
46 that serve the needs of working Americans; and
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48 **WHEREAS**, the Democratic Party and the labor movement have been longtime
49 friends and strong allies, based on our shared values; and
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51 **WHEREAS**, faced with the most anti-worker, anti-union Administration the nation
52 has experienced in 80 years, our commitment to the values we share with the labor
53 movement and to the freedom of workers freedom to form unions is as strong as
54 ever; and
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56 **WHEREAS**, the Employee Free Choice Act (S. 1925 and H.R. 3619) has been
57 introduced in the U.S. Congress in order to restore workers’ freedom to join unions;
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59 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Washington State Democratic Central
60 Committee (WSDCC) reaffirms its support of working people in this country and its
61 fundamental commitment to workers’ rights;
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63 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the WSDCC supports the AFL-CIO’s national
64 campaign and the campaigns of other unions to protect the freedom of American
65 workers to form unions and bargain collectively; and
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67 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the WSDCC endorses the Employee Free Choice
68 Act which would authorize the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union as
69 the bargaining representative when a majority of employees voluntarily sign
70 authorizations designating that union to represent them, provide for first contract
71 mediation and arbitration, and establish meaningful penalties for violations of a
72 worker’s freedom to choose a union; and
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74 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the WSDCC applauds Bill Sponsors Senator
75 Edward M. Kennedy and Representative George Miller and the additional 231
76 Democratic House and Senate members of Congress who have signed on as Co-
77 sponsors and strongly urges the remaining Democratic elected members of Congress
78 to co-sponsor this legislation; and
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80 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the WSDCC encourages Democratic candidates
81 and officeholders at all levels of government to actively support in visible ways,
82 local organizing and collective bargaining campaigns – while publicly challenging
83 employers that thwart workers’ freedom to form unions; and
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85 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the WSDCC recommends that Democratic
86 Committees at local levels pass similar resolutions supporting and recognizing the

87 rights of working Americans to form unions and bargain collectively in the United
88 States.

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90 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the WSDCC will participate with workers, their
91 unions, and allies in International Human Rights Day Activities on December 10,
92 2005 – joining nationwide activities to highlight the need for workers to have the
93 freedom to form unions and bargain collectively in America.
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96 Submitted to the WSDCC for consideration at its September 17, 2005 meeting
97 in Everett by Linda Chavez-Thompson, DNC Vice-Chair/Texas and Hon.
98 Mike Honda, DNC Vice Chair/California
99

100 Tina Abbott, Michigan
101 Morton Bahr, At-Large/DC
102 Margaret Blackshere, Illinois
103 R. Thomas Buffenbarger, At-Large/Maryland
104 Elizabeth Bunn, Michigan
105 William Burga, Ohio
106 Barbara Easterling, At-Large/Virginia
107 Hartina Flournoy, At-Large/DC
108 John Gage, At-Large/DC
109 William George, Pennsylvania
110 Daniel LeBlanc, Virginia
111 Leon Lynch, At-Large/Pennsylvania
112 Edward J. McElroy, At-Large/Rhode Island
113 Gerald McEntee, At-Large/Pennsylvania
114 Richard P. Michalski, At-Large/Maryland
115 John Olsen, Connecticut
116 Richard Ray, Georgia
117 Elizabeth Smith, At-Large/DC
118 John J. Sweeney, At-Large /Maryland
119 Randi Weingarten, At-Large/New York
120

121 Referred to the WSDCC with a recommendation of “Pass” by the Resolutions
122 Committee at its September 17, 2005 meeting in Everett.
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124 Passed by the WSDCC at its September 17, 2005 meeting in Everett.