

A Resolution Supporting the Employee Free Choice Act

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

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

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

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

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

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18 **WHEREAS** union workers earn 29 percent more than workers without a union, are 35
19 percent more likely to have access to health insurance, and are four times more likely to
20 have access to a guaranteed defined-benefit pension; and

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

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

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31 **WHEREAS** 77 percent of the public believes it is important to have strong laws protecting
32 the freedom for workers to make their own decision about having a union, and 58 percent
33 of workers would join a union if they had the chance; and

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

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39 **WHEREAS** when the right of workers to form a union is violated, wages fall, race and
40 gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination increases and job safety standards
41 disappear; and
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43 **WHEREAS** a worker's fundamental right to choose a union free from coercion and
44 intimidation is a public issue that requires public policy solutions, including legislative
45 remedies; and

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

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50 **WHEREAS** the Employee Free Choice Act will provide more stability between employers
51 and employees by requiring arbitration to resolve disputes in the negotiations of the first
52 contract; and

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

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

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65 **THEREFORE BE IT FURHTER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats urge
66 Congress to pass the Employee Free Choice Act to protect and preserve for America's
67 workers their freedom to choose for themselves whether or not for form a union; and

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69 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats Chair is
70 directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Democratic National Committee, and to
71 members of the Washington State Congressional delegation.

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74 Submitted by the Labor Caucus with the signatures of fifty State Central Committee
75 members to the Washington State Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its
76 January 24 meeting in Olympia. (Date Submitted 1/24/2008)

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78 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its January 24, 2009 meeting in Olympia.

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