

Resolution Supporting Employee Ownership

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3 **WHEREAS** employee ownership retains jobs in the USA and strengthens the US
4 economy;

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6 **WHEREAS** broader ownership of productive assets is beneficial for employees,
7 communities, and our country;

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9 **WHEREAS** expanding employee ownership and participation creates stronger
10 American companies, increases employment, and improves working conditions for
11 employees;

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13 **WHEREAS** a study by the Employee Ownership Foundation recently found that
14 employee- owned companies pay 5% to 12% higher wages than comparable
15 conventional companies, and also contribute 10% of pay to retirement accounts,
16 compared to traditionally owned companies' 3%;

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18 **WHEREAS** America needs a new business model that invests in workers and
19 empowers communities;

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21 **WHEREAS** the cooperative model with 'one worker, one vote' ownership is a proven
22 effective means to re-empower workers, make business accountable to Main Street
23 instead of Wall Street, and better sustain families and communities;

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25 **WHEREAS** employee ownership enables hard-pressed businesses to avoid shutting
26 down and/or shipping jobs overseas;

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28 **WHEREAS** cooperatives offer a model that builds capital and builds equity in a just
29 and equitable manner, and has been proven to build robust businesses that are able to
30 adjust to changing economic conditions and technology; and

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32 **WHEREAS** U.S. Senator U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and original co-sponsors
33 Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) introduced
34 two new legislative proposals into the U.S. Senate on December 18, 2009, to help
35 employees own and manage their own businesses through employee stock ownership
36 plans (ESOPs) or eligible worker-owned cooperatives;

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38 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats endorse and
39 support:

- 40 • Senate Bill S. 2909 (The Worker Ownership, Readiness, and Knowledge
41 ("WORK") Act), which would create an Office of Employee Ownership and
42 Participation, in the federal Department of Labor. This office would help create

43 state programs to promote employee ownership and employee participation in
44 company decision-making by providing education and outreach, training,
45 grants, and technical support for local efforts dedicated to employee ownership
46 and participation, and

- 47 • Senate Bill S. 2914 (The U.S. Employee Ownership Bank Act), which would
48 provide for the establishment of a bank that would make loans and loan
49 guarantees to employees to purchase a business through an ESOP or worker-
50 owned cooperative. Providing federal loans and loan guarantees for the
51 expansion of employee ownership would increase and retain jobs in the U.S. and
52 strengthen the U.S. economy; and

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54 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be
55 transmitted to relevant officials along with a request for response within thirty days,
56 listing the actions they are willing to take to support this resolution, or a list of the
57 reasons explaining why it cannot be supported.

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60 Submitted by the Pierce County Democrats to the Democratic Central Committee for
61 consideration at its June 26 convention in Vancouver. (Date Submitted 4/20/2010)

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63 Recommended Pass with amendments by the Subcommittee on the Corporate Power
64 and Media Reform, Economic Justice and Development, and Labor. (Date Considered
65 5/2/2010)

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67 Recommended Pass with amendments by the State Convention Platform Committee.
68 (Date Considered 6/5/2010)

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70 The Washington State Democratic Convention "PASSED" this resolution at its June 26,
71 2010 meeting in Vancouver.