

1 **Criminal Background Checks on Gun Sales in**
2 **Washington State and Support of I-594; Initiative to the**
3 **Legislature**

4
5 **WHEREAS** gun injuries and deaths in Washington State are a significant public health
6 problem with approximately 600 people killed by guns each year over the past decade,
7 and in 2010 more people in Washington State died by guns (609) than in traffic
8 accidents (554);
9

10 **WHEREAS** since 1994 over 2.1 million firearm purchase applications have been denied
11 because of federal criminal background checks for gun sales through licensed dealers
12 required by the Brady Law, but up to 40% of firearm purchases are between private
13 parties and not subject to criminal background checks;
14

15 **WHEREAS** risk for new criminal activity is increased among those with a prior
16 criminal history, inmate surveys have shown that at least 80% of firearms inmates used
17 in crimes were obtained in a private transfer, and more than 40% of homicide offenders
18 and inmates incarcerated for firearm-related offenses were prohibited persons when
19 they acquired their firearms;
20

21 **WHEREAS** one study (JAMA 2001; 285:1019-1026) found that denial of handgun
22 purchase to people in California who had committed violent misdemeanors was
23 associated with a decrease in risk of arrest for new gun and/or violent crimes;
24

25 **WHEREAS** fifteen states and the District of Columbia have enacted laws requiring
26 background checks for all firearm purchases or handgun purchases, and Washington
27 state has not;
28

29 **WHEREAS** current WSDCC platform supports “comprehensive gun-sale background
30 checks, including criminal, mental health, and domestic violence checks, applicable to
31 gun shows and other transactions”; and
32

33 **WHEREAS** Initiative 594 is an initiative to the Washington State legislature that would
34 apply background-check requirements currently used for gun sales by licensed dealers
35 to all gun sales and transfers, with specific exceptions, and require the checks be
36 conducted through licensed dealers;
37

38 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the WSDCC endorse Initiative 594, which would
39 apply criminal background-check requirements to all gun sales and transfers in
40 Washington State, with specific exceptions;
41

42 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic
43 Central Committee urges other Washington State organizations created under, or
44 associated with, the Democratic Party to support Initiative 594; and
45

46 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the WSDCC urges the Washington
47 State legislature to pass comprehensive legislation that would apply criminal
48 background-check requirements to all gun sales and transfers in Washington State, with
49 specific exceptions, in a manner that is commensurate with Initiative 594.
50

51
52 Submitted by the 45th Legislative Districts to the Washington State Democratic Central
53 Committee for consideration at its September 21, 2013 meeting in Ocean Shores.
54 (Date Submitted 9/9/2013)
55

56 The WSDCC Resolutions Committee "AMENDED THIS RESOLUTION AND
57 RECOMMENDED A PASS" at its September 21, 2013 meeting in Ocean Shores
58

59 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its September 21, 2013 meeting in Ocean
60 Shores.