

No on I-732

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WHEREAS the recently concluded Paris Agreement on Climate emphasized the need for a full complement of carbon reduction policies, including a cap on carbon and greenhouse gases (GHG), pricing carbon, and investments in climate adaptation and mitigation, etc., in order to keep global temperatures from rising above 2 degrees Celsius with an aspirational goal of keeping temperatures from rising above 1.5 degrees Celsius;

WHEREAS working people and our communities have been under a broad and relentless assault from an economic, political, and climate crisis that has manifested itself in the form of extreme income and wealth inequality, loss of family-wage union jobs, a vanishing middle class, a failure to fairly tax the 1% and to broadly share prosperity, increasing health and environmental problems from excess carbon emissions and green house gases (GHG), and disruptions in our economy, public health, and social safety net systems due to severe weather episodes due to climate change;

WHEREAS climate change is responsible for 9 of the hottest 12 years in recorded history in this new century, increasing rates and severity of forest fires, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, the closing of shell fish production in Puget Sound and Willapa Bay, accelerating glacial melting leading to increased flooding and storm water problems, increased frequency of droughts, and extreme storms like hurricane Katrina, Sandy and Yolanda in the Philippines;

WHEREAS all of the scientific research indicates that the problems created by climate change, impacting us all, will continue to grow, affecting our jobs, environment and health, and that to reverse climate change much of the world's proven oil reserves need to remain in the ground;

WHEREAS carbon and GHG pollution is responsible for an explosion of respiratory diseases in those most vulnerable – our children and seniors – and asthma related expenditures have reached \$ 73 million per year annually in Washington State;

WHEREAS direct line workers in the fossil fuel industries and vulnerable populations in immigrant communities and communities of color are most susceptible to health problems caused by carbon pollution, with two to three times the rates of asthma than in other communities;

40 **WHEREAS** droughts worldwide are causing the forced migration of millions of people
41 in search of food, water, and economic security and droughts in the United States are
42 having significant impact on food production and on workers and their families who
43 depend on agriculture for a living;

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45 **WHEREAS** equity must be at the center of principles and policies addressing climate
46 change such that neither direct line fossil fuel workers nor vulnerable communities of
47 color should bear the health or economic costs of moving from an economy dependent
48 on fossil fuels to one primarily based on alternative renewable energy sources;

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50 **WHEREAS** equity in the transition to a renewable energy economy with a minimum of
51 economic disruptions and to maximize employment of direct line fossil fuel dependent
52 workers during the transition, requires a degree of compliance flexibility as fossil fuel
53 dependent industries meet the new lower carbon emissions standards as well as
54 policies to prevent the "leakage" of jobs and pollution from these industries to other
55 states, regions, or countries where carbon reduction standards don't exist;

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57 **WHEREAS** equity in the transition to a renewable energy economy requires direct line
58 fossil fuel workers be provided with income and benefit support as well as family wage
59 job opportunities and training if a truly "Just Transition" is to take place, and equity
60 requires addressing the needs of entire communities currently dependent on income
61 from fossil fuel industries;

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63 **WHEREAS** equity in the transition to a renewable energy economy requires that
64 revenue raised through any carbon reduction program be invested, in part, in such a
65 way that the benefits to vulnerable populations and communities of color must
66 outweigh the policy's economic burdens including protection from rising energy costs
67 during the transition, investing in public transportation and creating opportunities for
68 jobs and training in green infrastructure development and the renewable energy
69 economy to mitigate against climate change impacts and to improve the quality of live
70 for low-income communities;

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72 **WHEREAS**, to make sure that any carbon reduction program is actually meeting the
73 carbon reduction goals, investing revenues in ways to protect vulnerable communities,
74 creating infrastructure and renewable energy jobs, and providing a truly "Just
75 Transition", an economic and environmental justice board with true representation from
76 direct line workers and communities of color will need to be created;

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78 **WHEREAS**, during the transition to a renewable energy economy repairing our failing
79 infrastructure will help create tens of thousands of family wage union jobs and lower
80 our carbon footprint;

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82 **WHEREAS** domestic sourcing our materials for both infrastructure projects and
83 renewable energy projects will maximize domestic job creation and significantly lower
84 the carbon footprint of the content for these projects;

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86 **WHEREAS** I-732, though well intentioned, relies only on carbon pricing with no cap
87 and no investment in fence line communities or communities of color, no "just
88 transition" for fossil fuel workers or the communities currently dependent on fossil fuel
89 production;

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91 **WHEREAS** I-732 is not revenue neutral, but according to a State Department of
92 Revenue analysis will increase Washington State's structural budget deficit by \$ 675
93 million over the next four years, exacerbating the current problem of funding the
94 McCleary decision, mental health funding, and a range of much needed social services;

95

96 **WHEREAS** raising a carbon tax while reducing the state's portion of the sales tax by
97 one percent and lowering the B&O tax without addressing the state's extreme structural
98 deficit will lead the legislature to contemplate raising these same taxes as soon as they
99 get the opportunity creating even greater public cynicism that government does not
100 work;

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102 **WHEREAS** we are past the point in history where one policy, in I-732, pricing carbon is
103 sufficient to significantly reduce carbon emissions;

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105 **WHEREAS** carbon emissions are beginning to rise again in British Columbia, where all
106 the have is a carbon price, with no cap and carbon revenue investments in climate
107 adaptation or mitigation; and

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109 **WHEREAS** the Working Families Tax rebate only addresses 47% of those who are poor
110 and there is a need to invest directly in communities of color to create good family wage
111 jobs in the new clean energy economy;

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113 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Party go on
114 record opposing I-732, and that the State Party go on record in support of a
115 comprehensive policy to reduce carbon emissions and GHGs that creates a descending
116 cap on emissions, prices carbon with the flexibility needed to prevent companies from
117 wholesale leaving the state while at the same time helping them to become as carbon
118 efficient as possible, provides equity to fossil fuel workers and communities of color,
119 invests in climate adaptation and mitigation and leverages an accelerated development
120 of the new clean energy economy; and

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122 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the State Democratic Party will work
123 with labor, environment, communities of color, faith, public health and progressive
124 business organizations to educate and organize around a comprehensive carbon and
125 GHG reduction policy that can be introduced to the state legislature or to the ballot at
126 the earliest possible opportunity.
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129 Submitted by the Executive Board to the WSDCC. (Date Submitted 1/29/2016)

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131 The Resolutions Committee amended this resolution and recommended that it be
132 "PASSED" at its January 30, 2016 meeting in Lynnwood.

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134 The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its January 30, 2016 meeting in Lynnwood.