

1 **Resolution Concerning I-1491 Extreme Risk Protection Orders**

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3 **WHEREAS** gun injuries and deaths in Washington State are a significant public health
4 problem with approximately 600 people killed by guns each year over the past decade;

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6 **WHEREAS** a majority of mass shooters over 20 years have shown signs of serious crisis
7 prior to taking fatal action and nearly 80% of those attempting suicide make their
8 intentions known before an attempt;

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10 **WHEREAS** family members, household members and law enforcement officers are
11 often in the best position to see early warning signs of dangerous, violent and
12 threatening behavior;

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14 **WHEREAS** the current Washington State Democratic platform supports “the stringent
15 enforcement of laws regulating the purchase and ownership of firearms, while
16 respecting the rights of responsible gun owners”;

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18 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1491 is modeled on successful laws around the country and based
19 on the well-established Washington State system of protection in order to fill gaps in the
20 system that allow people experiencing crisis or demonstrating violent behavior to
21 possess and purchase firearms;

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23 **WHEREAS** Initiative 1491 is an initiative to the people in Washington State that would
24 create Extreme Risk Protection Orders, which will allow families and law enforcement
25 to petition a court to temporarily suspend a person’s access to firearms if there is
26 documented evidence that an individual is threatening harm to themselves or others
27 because of dangerous mental illness or at high risk of violent behavior;

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29 **WHEREAS** the vast majority of people with mental health problems are no more likely
30 to be violent than anyone else and most people with mental illness are not violent, and
31 only 3%-5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental
32 illness; and

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34 **WHEREAS** people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be
35 victims of violent crime than the general population;

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37 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats support the
38 signature-gathering efforts for Initiative 1491 to qualify for the November 2016 ballot,
39 which would create temporary Extreme Risk Protection Orders, allowing family
40 members and law enforcement to petition a court to remove firearms from individuals
41 who present a serious danger to themselves or to others; and

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43 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats urge
44 the State Legislature to amend the initiative after passage to clarify that mental illness is
45 not the primary cause of mass shootings and to add due process for the mentally ill.
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48 Submitted by the 46th LD Caucus.

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50 The Platform Committee recommended that this resolution be passed at their June 17,
51 2016 meeting.

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53 The 2016 Washington State Democratic Convention passed this resolution on June 18,
54 2016.
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