

Respecting Freedom of and Diversity of Religion

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3 **WHEREAS** the very first amendment to the Constitution of the United States of
4 America enshrines Americans' religious freedom, including the right to practice any
5 religion or none at all;

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7 **WHEREAS** President Barack Obama, in his first inaugural address, proclaimed "We are
8 a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and nonbelievers. We are shaped
9 by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this earth;"

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11 **WHEREAS** Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's opinion in *Lynch v. Donnelly* observed that
12 state endorsement of religion "sends a message to non-adherents that they are
13 outsiders, not full members of the political community;

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15 **WHEREAS** Democrats stand for an open and respectful dialogue about faith in society,
16 embracing people of all faiths or none at all;

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18 **WHEREAS** the Democratic Party brings together people of many different faiths,
19 united by shared values and a deep-seated commitment to tolerance, compassion,
20 charity, and the well-being of others;

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22 **WHEREAS** the Washington State Democratic Party states on its website: "We believe in
23 the values of community, empathy, equality, tolerance, opportunity, and the common
24 good of the interdependent world we share. These values provide the basis for our
25 ideals and are supported by our state and federal Constitutions";

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27 **WHEREAS** recent studies by Pew Research show that almost 20% of Americans and
28 24% of Democratic-leaning registered voters report that they are unaffiliated with any
29 religion; and

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31 **WHEREAS** any gathering (meeting, convention, etc.) undertaken by the Washington
32 State Democratic Party at any level (precinct, legislative district, county, congressional
33 district, State Central Committee or state), that intentionally or unintentionally excludes
34 any group of Americans based on religious faith, is inconsistent with the Party's values
35 and beliefs;

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37 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Party and its
38 affiliates will not support actions, proclamations or policies at Party events that would
39 have the effect of excluding, intimidating or otherwise alienating any group, including
40 nonbelievers and the religiously unaffiliated, just as the Party does not support action
41 that excludes any group by characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender or sexual
42 orientation;

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THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that neither the Washington State Democratic Party nor any of its affiliates (with the exception of special-interest caucuses) will endorse any sort of prayer, faith-based invocation, or religious activity of any kind at a Democratic Party event; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution recognizes and preserves (i) the right to organize, around religion, within the State Democratic Party, a caucus or special-interest group to advance their specific political concerns, (ii) Party social activities such as holiday parties, and (iii) the ability to conduct meetings or other Party business at any location, including churches.

Submitted by the King County Convention.

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

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