

1 **Resolution to Improve Community-Police Relations by**
2 **Fostering Accountability and Public Trust**

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4 **WHEREAS** we believe that criminal justice and human rights are inseparable;

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6 **WHEREAS** progressive action against injustice is a core part of our Democratic Party
7 Platform;

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9 **WHEREAS** we affirm that the role of law enforcement is to protect human life and
10 serve the community;

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12 **WHEREAS** we believe that accountability and public trust are necessary for a healthy
13 relationship between our communities and the law enforcement agencies that serve us;

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15 **WHEREAS** the current law in Washington state on the justifiable use of deadly force by
16 law enforcement (RCW 9A.16.040) fails to provide clear guidance regarding the use of
17 such force, and makes it virtually impossible to hold law enforcement accountable for
18 misuse of such force;

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20 **WHEREAS** RCW 9A.16.040 and the prosecutorial decisions pursuant to it have
21 contributed to a perception that our law enforcement agencies are able to operate
22 outside the law in their use of deadly force; and

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24 **WHEREAS** the necessarily close working relationships between law enforcement
25 agencies and our public prosecutors contribute to a widespread public perception that
26 prosecutors have a conflict of interest when dealing with allegations of misconduct by
27 law enforcement, especially regarding the use of deadly force;

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29 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we call for the establishment of independent and
30 broadly representative citizen review boards charged with the responsibility and
31 granted the authority to ensure transparent, fair, and accountable oversight of all law
32 enforcement agencies in the state;

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34 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we call for amending RCW 9A.16.040
35 by removing its “without malice and with a good faith belief” defense and by adding
36 requirements that the subject pose an imminent threat of death or serious injury and
37 that the use of deadly force be necessary as defined in RCW 9A.16.010;

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39 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we call for the establishment of an
40 independent state-wide special prosecutor with authority to investigate and file charges
41 in cases involving alleged misuse of deadly force and/or biased policing practices by
42 law enforcement personnel;

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THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call for (1) the state-wide collection of data from all levels of law enforcement and corrections officers on all uses of force, including hand and leg techniques, uses of a deadly weapon and of less lethal weapons, pointing of a weapon or electronic control weapon as a threat of force, and any instance in which injury is observed or alleged by the subject; and (2) regular reports to the public by each law enforcement agency, not less than annually, as to its use of force as collected in accordance with the state-wide protocol described above; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we call for the training program for law enforcement and correction officers in this state to include such core elements as de-escalation techniques, implicit bias training, and a comprehensive program on dealing with people with mental health issues, so that officers are trained to deal with people and situations involving such issues in a humane and safe manner.

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.