

Criminal Justice Reform

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3 **WHEREAS** the mass incarceration of American citizens has expanded tremendously
4 since 1980, disproportionately impacting poverty-stricken individuals and communities
5 of color and immigrants;

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7 **WHEREAS** many citizens face prison time for nonviolent crimes, including for owing
8 debt;

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10 **WHEREAS** for-profit businesses lobby to privatize all aspects of the criminal justice
11 system, including juvenile detention, prison health care, operations of jails, ICE
12 detention facilities, and correctional facilities, probation and parole reviews – all at a
13 tremendous cost that exceeds what taxpayers would fund for state and federal control
14 of these aspects of the criminal justice system;

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16 **WHEREAS** the current policies and practices of the school-to-prison pipeline push
17 many young children of color and those in poverty into the criminal justice system for
18 nonviolent acts and behaviors; and

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20 **WHEREAS** offenders who have served their time are often denied the right to vote,
21 bespeaking this nation’s failure to ensure that all citizens have a right to vote;

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23 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats assert that the
24 operation of the criminal justice system is an inherent function of government, not for
25 for-profit businesses or corporations;

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27 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats
28 support the efforts to alleviate prison overcrowding, to promote fair and just sentencing
29 policies, to call for the elimination of unnecessary pre-trial detention time, to keep
30 juveniles and adults separate, to support effective and full funding of training,
31 education, probation, and parole strategies to re-integrate people who have served their
32 time and to restore them to full citizenship with the right to vote, to serve on juries, to
33 access fully government services, such as financial aid for education, housing, and
34 employment assistance; and

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36 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats
37 support legislative policies that reduce the number of young people who drop out of
38 school, are suspended or expelled and will support the young people in programs that
39 work with law enforcement to educate rather than penalize the youth.
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42 Submitted by the Grant County Convention.

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44 The Platform Committee recommended that this resolution be passed at their June 17,
45 2016 meeting.

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47 The 2016 Washington State Democratic Convention passed this resolution on June 18,
48 2016.

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