

Resolution on Creating Living and Thriving Wage Jobs in the Clean Energy Economy

WHEREAS, with an abundant supply of skilled workers and advanced technology, the United States is poised to take a critical role in the global clean energy movement and the American workforce can advance the goals of the new energy economy while increasing U.S. competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, workers who belong to unions are more likely to have fair wages, job security, safe working conditions, healthcare benefits, paid vacations, retirement security and a fair process to address their workplace concerns, and when unions are strong, the middle class economy thrives; and

WHEREAS, there are multiple and frequently opposing studies assessing the estimated impact on employment that a transition to clean energy will create. The impact of total net job loss or job gain, is only a part of the consequence of the move to clean energy sources. An additional consequence is that the job losses are substantially more likely to be union jobs and the loss of additional union jobs will have a negative effect on declining union strength and the associated economically strained and diminishing blue collar, middle class; and

WHEREAS, innovation in the clean energy sector offers an opportunity to ensure jobs that arise from those industries are union jobs: high-quality, safe, living and thriving wage, family-supporting, *Union* jobs. Legislative and community support for proposed clean energy projects should be based on the contractors/employers neutrality in union organizing campaigns, construction projects with project labor agreements, and federal Davis-Bacon Act – along with its state and local counterparts, which curb cost and time overruns, and prevent contractors from bringing in low paid workers that undercut the local workforce wages and economy. North America’s Building Trades Unions’ U.S. Department of Labor-registered apprenticeship programs train workers to become highly-skilled construction workers, investing \$1.6 billion annually. If this system were a college or university, it would be the largest degree-granting college or university in the United States. With these measures in place to prevent a drop in occupational quality, the clean energy economy can provide benefits to communities most heavily impacted by the transition from fossil fuel industries as well as environmental frontline communities;¹ and

¹ Center for Community Change

Submitted by: Wahkiakum County Democrats to the Washington State Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its September 28, 2019 meeting in Yakima (Date Submitted September 14, 2019)

WSDCC-931-LAB-SUPPORT OF LIVING WAGE JOBS & CLEAN ENERGY

34 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Party
35 supports and promotes clean energy technology and infrastructure developed, built,
36 and operated with a union work force; and

37 **THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic
38 Party urges our federal, state, and local legislators to support and promote the clean
39 energy movement, unions and economy by inclusion of *Made in America* provisions
40 and labor standards, including project labor agreements, prevailing wage laws and the
41 use of a unionized labor workforce.