

**North Carolina Democratic Party
2010 Final Resolutions**

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A: POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Urging Change Crews at Precinct Level (11)

FAILED

Whereas: A plan to implement Obama-style "change crews" at the precinct level has been suggested by Organizing for America,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support the idea of first implementing change crews at the county level, then at the cluster level, and then at the precinct level, wherever they are deemed to be sustainable and effective; and

Be It Further Resolved: That this resolution be transmitted to President Obama and those Democratic office holders elected by N.C. voters.

2. Urging a Process to Account for Resolutions (5)

Whereas: An amendment has been presented to the State Executive Committee of the NCDP and has been passed in relation to the resolutions passed on from the county, district and the state convention actions; and

Whereas: Those resolutions occurring most often are to make up the Political and Policy Agenda of the State Party and are to be brought to the attention of the appropriate state or national caucus or legislator by the Party Chair or his or her representatives; and

Whereas: The approved resolutions represent the goals and the conscience of North Carolina Democrats as guidelines for future activity and legislation; and

Whereas: In the past it has been difficult to obtain information concerning any activity relating to the Party's resolutions,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That a procedure be established for accountability for those resolutions included in the Political and Policy Agenda of the State Party; and

Be It Further Resolved: That this process be transparent and openly communicated in a timely manner no less than quarterly to each county and district organization to encourage grassroots participation and also support for specific issues when needed, thereby encouraging the timely forward progress of Party goals.

3. Urging Legislative Action to Reform Distribution of Taxpayer Check-off Money (2)

Whereas: Under NCGS § 163-278.41, taxpayer check-off money is contributed to the North Carolina Political Parties Financing Fund, set up in 1977, allowing state party chairs to apply to the N.C. Board of Elections for money that a party is entitled to; and
Whereas: From the language of NCGS § 163-

278.42(a) from 1992 through 2009, legislators clearly intended to give the State Party Chair sole authority to distribute only 50% of the money; and
Whereas: From 1992 through 2009, NCGS § 163-278.42(d) directed that allocation of the remaining 50% of the funds be made by a committee composed of the State Party Chair and Treasurer, up to two more additional people appointed by the State Party Chair, and the 13 US Congressional District Chairs to expend funds for legitimate campaign expenses as listed under § 163-278.42(e) that could include party HQ operations such as party building and GOTV; and

Whereas: Upon knowledge and belief, prior to 2009, the District Chairs were presented only with opportunities to contribute their half of the money back to the State Party, effectively leaving the Districts asking the State Party for party building and GOTV money that the legislature intended for them to have in the first place; and

Whereas: Based on knowledge and belief, once the District Chairs discovered they were entitled to 50% of the taxpayer check-off money and signaled their intent to use their share for their districts and counties, the NCDP directed a legislator to make a last-minute change to a campaign finance bill – S.L 2009-534, s. 10.1 (originally H 1111) which allowed the NCDP Chair to appoint additional committee members equal to the number of district chairs; and
Whereas: This amendment would have drowned out the votes of the 13 District Chairs, effectively allowing the NCDP chair to control 100% of the taxpayer check-off money; and

Whereas: The recent activity at the N.C. Board of Elections has shown us the hazards of allowing any sole individual to treat State Party funds as their own; and

Whereas: While an agreement has been made between the NCDP Chair and the 13 District Chairs to allow for the distribution of 50% of the taxpayer check-off money for 2010 according to the pre-2009 law, there is nothing to prevent an NCDP Chair from keeping all the taxpayer check-off money in the future; and

Whereas: The new law also increases the taxpayer check-off money from \$1.00 to \$3.00, meaning even more money is at stake now; and

Whereas: Equitable distribution of the taxpayer check-off money to the districts and counties funds traditional party-building and GOTV activities that benefit ALL Democratic candidates,
Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge Democratic members of the NC General Assembly to immediately introduce legislation to remove the

power of the State Party Chair to appoint additional members of the committee, limiting that committee to the Chair and the Treasurer of that State Party plus the 13 Congressional District Chairs; and Be It Finally Resolved: That the suggested language for the change in the first sentence of G.S. 163-278.42(d) read as follows:

“The allocation of the remaining fifty percent (50%) of the funds under subsections (a) or (b) of this section shall be made by a committee composed of the State Chair of that political party, the Treasurer of that party, and the Congressional District Chairs of that party, and that the State Chair of that party shall serve as Chair of this committee.”

4. Urging Removing the Name of Charles B. Aycock from the Vance Aycock Dinner (4)

Whereas: Resolutions have been submitted to retire the name of Governor Charles B. Aycock from the name of the Vance Aycock Dinner of the NCDP, based on his well documented legacy of hate and division; and

Whereas: Officials of the NCDP met and decided to "retire with honor" the name of Governor Aycock after fifty years from a position of honor; and

Whereas: That decision was inconsistent with the intent and purpose of the original resolution – to “remove” Governor Charles B. Aycock’s name from the event as a person of questionable character inconsistent with the views of the NCDP,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Executive Committee of the NCDP **remove**, not **retire**, the name of Charles B. Aycock from the Vance Aycock Dinner, effective following the next Vance Aycock Dinner; and

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP Executive Committee recommend that Governor Aycock’s name be replaced with the name of the late Senator Jeannie Lucas and that this NCDP dinner henceforth be named the “Vance Lucas Dinner.”

5. Urging Amending the NCDP’s Standing Rules for State Executive Committee Meetings (2)

Whereas: The State Parliamentarian of the NCDP has ruled that unfinished business not completed at the end of one State Executive Committee meeting will *not* be the first order of business at the next Executive Committee meeting, and that the NCDP Plan of Organization or Special Rules adopted can and do override Roberts’ Rules of Order,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge the members of the State Executive Committee to amend the NCDP Plan of Organization by adding the following language into its Standing Rules: ***All business not finished at the end of a State Executive Committee meeting will be carried over to the next State Executive Committee meeting as the First Order of Business.***

6. Urging the NCDP to Lead Democrats in Voicing Strong Public Support for President Barack Obama (4), (11)

Whereas: President Obama was elected by the people of the United States to lead this nation during the current four year term; and

Whereas: President Obama, a thinking and deeply resourceful person, is seeking to lead with intelligence, wisdom, imagination and good will; and Whereas: President Obama is a Democrat,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That we call upon the leadership of the NCDP to lead Democrats of the State in voicing strong support for President Obama; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That we call upon the Party leadership to make public statements, publish letters and articles, and hold public events in favor of the President.

7. Urging Support for President Barack Obama (4), (11)

Whereas: President Barack Obama was elected on an agenda of change after years of policies that have lowered the living standard of most Americans, put our environmental future at risk, enmeshed us in foreign wars, disregarded human rights, and damaged our international reputation; and

Whereas: President Obama has been addressing these crises, particularly in health care, jobs and the economy, and advancing on a path of constructive change; and

Whereas: President Obama's path has been continually obstructed by increasingly disingenuous and divisive congressional Republicans, and his bridge-building and consensus seeking have been met with rejection, even of policies earlier proposed by Republicans themselves; and

Whereas: We believe in President Obama's sincere aspiration for the well-being of all and are inspired by his leadership; and

Whereas: No one person can enact such change alone, even a President,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP actively support President Obama by advocating explicitly for desired change with him, our legislators, and our

fellow citizens, to provide a counter-balance that enables him to accomplish more of his stated goals and provide a mandate to clear his way; and Be It Further Resolved: That we urge all Americans to be politically active in their communities and invite them to volunteer with the Democratic Party and/or Organizing for America, President Obama's grassroots organization, and/or other relevant grassroots organizations to work for the change we seek; and

Be It Further Resolved: That this resolution be transmitted through every available communication immediately after its adoption; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That this resolution be transmitted to President Obama and those office holders elected by North Carolina voters.

8. In Opposition to the Votes of Congressmen Kissell, McIntyre and Shuler Against Healthcare Bill (7)

Whereas: The NCDP at the county, district, state and national levels has supported healthcare for all Americans for over half a century; and

Whereas: The healthcare proposal that was recently adopted by the U. S. Congress was passed on a party-line vote with Congressmen Larry Kissell, Mike McIntyre and Heath Shuler voting in opposition; and

Whereas: Democrats have consistently supported these Congressmen's election and re-election to Congress with their time, money, and other resources,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP will encourage them to abandon any plans they may have to support its repeal.

B: THE ECONOMY

1. Urging NCDP to Advocate for Creation of a Consumer Financial Protection Agency (CFPA) (4) FAILED

Whereas: Consumer financial products such as credit cards, student loans, auto loans, payday loans, and others have proliferated without effective regulation; and

Whereas: Many of these products create and frequently update lengthy, obscure documents setting and changing the terms of the loans; and

Whereas: Many of these products have contributed to the recent economic problems faced by middle class Americans; and

Whereas: The consumer loan industry has developed increasingly predatory practices and usurious interest rates in the absence of regulation, with payday loans

at interest rates to make loan sharks blush at higher than 450% APR, and to create a treadmill of debt from which many can never escape, Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP advocate establishment of a federal Consumer Financial Protection Agency (CFPA) as an independent agency not under the Federal Reserve Board (which is NOT a federal agency and not subject to the usual review processes of a federal agency); and Be It Further Resolved: That this agency be charged with requiring consumer lenders to offer only clear, reasonable loan terms, and interest rates within 12 percentage points of the prime rate; and Be It Finally Resolved: That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the North Carolina Congressional Delegation urging the delegation to sponsor this federal CFPA, and that the North Carolina State Democratic Party instruct its elected representatives to pursue the creation of a CFPA.

2. Urging Passage of Financial/Banking Structural Reform Legislation (4), (11)

Whereas: Our current economic collapse was precipitated by an unregulated, poorly overseen financial sector that could engage in extremely risky behavior with little consequence; and

Whereas: Massive taxpayer bailouts of firms that were deemed "too big to fail" were necessary to keep our economy from sinking into Depression; and

Whereas: This public risk, private gain mentality among financial industry giants is unacceptable; and,

Whereas: The recent deep recession was caused by unregulated practices of banks and other financial institutions; and

Whereas: The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Federal Reserve Board, the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS), and the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), with vastly different rules and resources among the various agencies, all have regulatory authority over corporations which hold depositors' funds and make loans, with the regulated institutions able to select which agency would regulate each of them independent of the loans being made; and

Whereas: The Federal Reserve Board of Governors including most prominently the current and previous Chairmen of the Federal Reserve, Ben Bernanke and Alan Greenspan, has told Congress and the public, consistently, repeatedly, and aggressively, that the financial markets and banking system are best left to regulate themselves [Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Federal Reserve, "Government regulation and derivative contracts" Coral Gables, FL, February 21, 1997]; and

Whereas: The Federal Reserve Board of Governors not only failed to regulate the financial markets and banking system before the financial collapse, but continues to refuse to perform its regulatory function, and in fact refuses to provide Congress information Congress has lawfully and dutifully requested; and Whereas: Since the repeal of parts of the Glass-Steagall Act by the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (allowing bank holding companies to own other financial companies), these bank holding companies were allowed to become “too big to fail” and a policy which encouraged corporations to buy failing institutions rather than allow them to declare bankruptcy further reduced the number of banks and made each even larger; and

Whereas: Many of these companies were involved in many different financial activities, i.e., traditional banking, investment banking, insurance, hedging, issuing of derivatives, credit default swaps and many others, with each activity having very different risk levels associated with them; and

Whereas: Many of these hedges, derivatives, and credit default swaps are extremely complicated, are not transparent to anyone except the parties to the contract, and can become a significant portion of the capitalization of the financial sector; and

Whereas: If these large complex companies were required to submit plans for their rapid and orderly shutdown should the company go under, these plans would help regulators understand the structure of the companies they oversee and serve as a roadmap for shutting them down if the company fails, Therefore Be It Resolved: That legislation be enacted at all levels of government to regulate financial industry practices to the extent necessary to preclude another meltdown, and

Be It Further Resolved: That steps be taken to remove the threat to our economy of firms that are “too big to fail”; and

Be It Further Resolved: That shareholders and creditors of all corporations and privately held institutions be held responsible and accountable for private risk; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP advocate the re-enactment of the portions of the Glass-Steagall Act repealed by the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and the application of antitrust laws to financial institutions; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the OTS be incorporated under the FDIC where all institutions which hold deposits and make loans would be regulated and all would pay into a government-run insurance fund with rates based on the risk of the loans; and

Be It Further Resolved: That any new approach, structure, or agency designed and intended to regulate the financial markets and banking system ought to be carefully insulated and separated from any pressure or influence from the Federal Reserve system, and from companies and individuals earning their livelihoods in the financial markets and banking system, to make the agency as independent as possible; and

Be It Further Resolved: That authority to oversee failing institutions (until they are solvent and under new management or shut down) be given to the FDIC along with the authority to require large, complex companies to periodically submit plans for their rapid and orderly shutdown should the company go under; if they fail to submit acceptable plans, they would have higher capital requirements and restrictions on growth and activity, as well as divestment; and

Be it Further Resolved: That tighter capital and leverage regulations, and new derivatives regulations and proprietary trading bans be placed on financial institutions; and

Be it Further Resolved: That there be transparency and accountability with regard to derivatives, credit default swaps, and any other new financial instrument by having them issued and traded under the regulatory authority of the SEC; and

Be It Further Resolved: That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to our representatives in Congress urging them to support these changes in the regulation of lending institutions, and

Be It Finally Resolved: That this resolution be forwarded to the NCDP, asking all to join in supporting this resolution.

3. Urging Reducing Public Employees’ Salaries Instead of Lay Offs as a Response to Budget Constraints (11) FAILED

Whereas: Our government, at all levels, provides vital services that help ensure the viability of our communities and their citizens; and

Whereas: In 2008 there was an approximate 44% increase in unemployment in North Carolina; and

Whereas: As of January 23, 2009, North Carolina's unemployment rate was 8.7% and growing; and

Whereas: Unemployment leads to family and community instability; and

Whereas: Local, county and state services for the unemployed will be in greater demand; and

Whereas: Our schools are already suffering from inadequate staffing; and

Whereas: Maintaining public employees will prevent more instability in N.C. and allow public services to continue for the good of all,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That state, county, and local government agencies, including school districts, make every effort to negotiate a temporary reduction in worker salaries as opposed to laying off workers causing possible disruption in services and lower worker morale.

4. Urging NCDP Efforts in Behalf of Tobacco Farm Workers (2), (4)

Whereas: Farm workers are excluded from the worker protections of the National Labor Relations Act; and

Whereas: Farm workers are often paid sub-poverty wages and still survive at subsistence level, facts not only tragic but a moral disgrace hidden from the eyes of most Americans; and

Whereas: Farm work remains the second most dangerous type of work in the U.S. due to exposure to deadly pesticides, heat stroke; and, tobacco farm workers are especially at risk because they can absorb the amount of nicotine found in 36 cigarettes each day during their work; and

Whereas: Tragedies which occur in the fields are due to industry-wide problems that must be addressed by those who have control over the tobacco market; and,

Whereas: Reynolds Tobacco's billion-dollar profit comes as a direct result of those who labor in the fields planting, tending and harvesting the industry's tobacco,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP join the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) in its call for Reynolds Tobacco to take responsibility for the oppressive conditions in which tobacco farm workers labor and work with FLOC to create changes that will improve the lives of growers and farm workers alike; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP continue to demonstrate our support until Reynolds addresses the injustices that farm workers endure in their supply chain and give these workers the respect they deserve.

5. Urging Support for U.S. Representative Peter Defazio's Proposed H.R. 4191: "Let Wall Street Pay for the Restoration of Main Street" (4)

Whereas: U.S. Representative Peter Anthony DeFazio (D-Oregon) has introduced H.R. 4191 "Let Wall Street Pay for the Restoration of Main Street Act of 2009" to impose a small tax of around one-half of one percent on all transactions in U.S. financial markets ("Wall Street"); and

Whereas: The dollar volume of trading in U.S. financial markets is now some fifty times larger, as a

multiple of Gross Domestic Product, than it was in the 1960s; and

Whereas: Less than five percent of the dollar volume of trading in U.S. financial markets represents activity undertaken to provide funding to real companies providing real services or producing real goods; and

Whereas: 95 percent or more of the dollar volume of trading in U.S. financial markets is created by trading schemes such as arbitrage, program trading, or high-frequency trading, which would immediately be recognized as "churning" if done with an individual's account by that individual's broker,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call upon our elected representatives in Congress to co-sponsor and support H.R. 4191, "Let Wall Street Pay for the Restoration of Main Street Act of 2009."

6. Urging a Living Wage Minimum Wage (2), (4), (11)

Whereas: The current minimum wage is below the poverty level,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the minimum hourly wage be based on the Health and Human Services poverty threshold for a family of four, which is currently \$10.47 per hour.

7. Urging Reforming Government Regulations to Support Local Broadband Networks (11), (13)

Whereas: Local broadband networks are responsive to local needs, enabling local innovation and job-creation; and

Whereas: Local networks are cost-effective because they do not invest in surveillance technologies to monitor subscribers' internet usage for marketing and advertising ventures; and

Whereas: Local networks protect civil liberties and preserve the internet "commons" from enclosure by media consolidation; and

Whereas: Broadband internet access is as widely regarded as an essential utility as electricity or telephone services; and

Whereas: Advances in digital technologies reduce the cost of operating broadband networks,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Democratic Party endorses reform of federal, state and local regulations to support locally-owned broadband networks – for-profit, non-profit, municipal and rural areas – to ensure broadband availability regardless of one's locale or economic status.

8. Urging Regulation of Propane (LPG) (4)

Whereas: Non-regulation of propane is a national concern; and

Whereas: Unregulated propane pricing leads to price gouging of consumers and presents a hardship for senior citizens and other consumers on fixed, moderate, or low income; and

Whereas: Natural gas is regulated by the State Utilities Commission which sets rates that are fair to rate payers and gives natural gas companies an opportunity to earn the Commission- determined fair return on investment and to recover the costs of providing utility services if those costs are prudently incurred,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP request the State Legislature to take all steps necessary to regulate pricing of propane companies for all goods and service; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the State Utilities Commission or other agency that the Legislature may create will regulate all goods and services of propane companies in a manner similar to the way the Commission regulates natural gas companies.

9. Urging Landslide Safety Legislation (11)

Whereas: Landslides and other slope failures are natural and recurring elements of mountain geology in Western North Carolina; and

Whereas: Improper development on steep slopes poses a threat to human safety and property,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That we fully support the goal of mandating that developers on the steepest slopes and in known landslide hazard areas (1) consult a qualified engineer, (2) obtain special approvals for grading activities, (3) satisfy minimal engineering standards, (4) site structures so as to minimize landslide hazards to safety and property, and (5) maintain natural vegetation or replant trees to stabilize slopes; and

Be It Further Resolved: That we fully support the goal of requiring that home buyers be informed of known landslide hazards on property they purchase; and

Be It Further Resolved: That we believe that these additional protections for homeowners and homebuyers and businesses in Western North Carolina are urgently needed and must be adopted and made effective as quickly as possible; and

Be It Further Resolved: That we urge all elected office holders to support this agenda, by vote and by influence; and

Be It Further Resolved: That this resolution be transmitted through every available communication immediately after its adoption; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That this resolution be transmitted to Governor Perdue and office holders elected by North Carolina voters.

10. In Support of Working People (5)

Whereas: Working people in America are facing the worst attacks in generations on our jobs, our healthcare, and our retirements; and

Whereas: Trillions of dollars of taxpayers' money have been handed to bankers and other financial institutions in the wake of the current crisis, much of it unaccounted for; and

Whereas: The last decade has been tougher on the middle class than any in 50 years: median household income and net worth have fallen; household debt rose 117 percent; and the decade ended with zero net job creation; and

Whereas: Thanks to the Bush tax cuts, the 400 wealthiest Americans saw their taxes fall by a third while their average income doubled to \$263 million a year; and

Whereas: Between 1979 and 2005, the median annual income for Americans grew by 12 percent while the income for the top .01 percent of earners rose by 384 percent; and

Whereas: In 1980 CEOs of major U.S. corporations earned 40 times the pay of the typical worker and in 2007 they earned 350 times as much; and

Whereas: The gap between the wealthiest Americans and everyone else is widening, and that inequality is greater here than in most other developed countries; and

Whereas: One out of every ten Americans who describe themselves as middle class say they are struggling and more than 92 percent of them say they have lost all hope of moving up to the next rung on the economic ladder,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP does not believe America should be a place where the rich get richer while the middle class barely treads water and the poor fall by the wayside; that the NCDP opposes bank and corporate bailouts and supports strong financial reform and accountability; and that the NCDP reaffirms its party platform that we are the party of the people, not the privileged.

11. Urging Collective Bargaining for NC's Public Employees (1), (2), (4), (6)

Whereas: The NCDP at its June 2008 convention passed a resolution Urging the restoration of collective bargaining rights for public employees as a legislative priority; and

Whereas: The State Democratic Party reasserted its "fundamental belief in the collective bargaining process as a means of serving the interests of both public and private employees and employers"; and

Whereas: These "interests include better productivity, fair and adequate employee compensation and

benefits, and safe, harmonious and healthy working conditions”; and

Whereas: The International Labor Organization of the United Nations in 2007 ruled that NCGS 95-98 "violates internationally recognized human rights standards”; and

Whereas: Only North Carolina and Virginia continue to deny their public workers this fundamental human right,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP wage a vigorous campaign to assure the passage of S427 and H750 that would restore to public workers the right to collectively bargain by repealing GS 95-98, and resolve to engage the community and local leaders in this effort.

C: EDUCATION POLICY

1. Urging Education as a Policy and Budgetary Priority (6)

Whereas: The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as “No Child Left Behind”) is due for reauthorization and the state of North Carolina continues to focus on educational advancement for every child; and

Whereas: It is time for Democrats to once again demonstrate their commitment to equitable and excellent educational opportunities; and

Whereas: Democrats support every child’s Constitutional right to a sound basic education that includes a competent school principal, a competent teacher in every classroom, and adequate resources for that education; and,

Whereas: Democrats support student assessments that help educators determine how to help students progress on pace for their age and grade; and

Whereas: Democrats support accountability that takes into consideration individual learning needs and styles and employs a palette of ways to assess student progress, avoiding high stakes situations where student opportunities are determined only by standardized tests; and

Whereas: Democrats support a coherent curriculum that includes strong and rich content in the sciences, humanities and the arts, and that emphasizes continuity of learning as students move from grade to grade; and

Whereas: Democrats support engaging, project-based learning opportunities that foster civic engagement over a student’s lifetime; and

Whereas: Teachers are critical to every student’s success and deserve opportunities for meaningful professional development and collaborative, respectful working environments; and

Whereas: Family partnership with schools is also critical, and thus schools need adequate resources and time to build strong relationships beyond the school; and

Whereas: Numerous educational studies demonstrate that economically and racially diverse schools foster cost-effective, high quality education by:

- Attracting and retaining good teachers;
- Requiring funding for quality education that is two to three times less than high-poverty schools; and
- Encouraging middle-class families to remain and participate in public schools,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call on our elected officials to ensure that educational policies and funding are driven by these principles and priorities; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP support a mandate for economically and racially diverse schools; and

Be It Further Resolved: That textbooks reflect the total history of the United States of America regarding the contributions of Blacks, Native Americans, other minorities and women; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That this resolution be forwarded to the North Carolina Text Book Commission with a mandate to include the many contributions of all North Carolinians and others.

2. Urging Raising the Legal Age for Dropping Out of School in North Carolina (11)

Whereas: The original intent of the early age of voluntary separation from school was to enable young people to help on farms and in factories; and

Whereas: The need for young people to work at such a young age has decreased; and

Whereas: The North Carolina Board of Education allows a student to voluntarily separate from Public School at sixteen years old without parental consent; and

Whereas: Children are not legally considered adults until the age of eighteen; and

Whereas: Many states have found that an increase in age of voluntary separation from school has improved their graduation rate; and

Whereas: Most of the children will not be able to compete in the job market without at least a high school diploma; and

Whereas: Having young people on the streets without a proper means of support can lead to a higher incidence of crime; and

Whereas: It may cost more to the community in police and medical services to have young people out of school at this early age,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That North Carolina adopt the policy that voluntary separation from public school may be allowed only 1) at sixteen years of age with a parent's consent, or 2) at the legal age of eighteen years, and

Be It Finally Resolved: That they may also voluntarily separate from school if they enroll in and successfully complete a certified GED program.

3. Urging Educational Achievement by Prisoners (4), (11)

Whereas: North Carolina's secondary educational expenditures from the year 2006-2007 were \$7,228 per student; and

Whereas: North Carolina's per prisoner costs as of 2001 (the most recent year data were attainable) were \$26,984; and

Whereas: In January 2009, only 28.5% of North Carolina inmates entering prisons had a high school diploma or its equivalent and less than 2% had achieved any post secondary education; and

Whereas: Several studies and papers have illustrated a negative correlation between recidivism rates and educational attainment,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That in order to lower recidivism rates, all inmates upon leaving North Carolina correctional facilities be given the opportunity to at least achieve a high school diploma or its equivalent and/or a vocational training certificate.

D: ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. In Opposition to the Right of Felons to Serve as Sheriff (6) FAILED

Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support Senate Bill 351 that adds "No person is eligible to serve as Sheriff if that person has been adjudged guilty of any felony against this State or the United States, or of a felony in another state that also would be a felony if it had been committed in this State, whether or not that person has been restored to the rights of citizenship in the manner prescribed by law" to existing language in North Carolina law.

2: In Opposition to the Supreme Court Ruling in the Citizens United V. Federal Election Commission Case (2), (4), (5), (6), (10), (11)

[Background: Jan 21, 2010: A divided Supreme Court ruled on the basis of the free speech principle of the First Amendment that government cannot regulate political speech by corporations.]

Whereas: The U.S. Supreme Court decision paraphrased above is an egregious case of judicial

activism, overturning established precedent and numerous federal and state laws and greatly expanding the concept of corporate personhood; and Whereas: The decision erroneously treats the common-sense regulation of the flow of money in politics as a restriction on free speech; and Whereas: The influence of corporations and other special interests has already largely overwhelmed the democratic process; and

Whereas: The torrent of corporate money unleashed by this decision will further drown out the voices of ordinary Americans and threaten our democracy, Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP register its firm opposition to the ruling; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP instruct its elected representatives to pass forthwith legislative remedies to this assault on our democracy, such as the following:

- A constitutional amendment stating that corporations are not persons entitled to constitutional rights;
- The Fair Elections Now Act (HR 1826) calling for voter-owned elections of members of Congress, and for voter-owned election programs at other levels of government;
- Requiring detailed disclosure of all contributors, and their contributions, for political ads and other electioneering communications;
- Requiring shareholders and union members to review and approve any spending campaign drawn up by corporate chiefs or union leaders;
- Requiring CEOs of corporations to appear in their corporations' political ads – print and online as well as broadcast – to identify themselves and state that they approved the ad;
- A strict ban on all foreign intrusion in federal elections;
- Use of the state's power to grant and renew corporate charters to curtail the intrusion of corporations in the political process; and
- Restricting campaign spending by companies that do business with federal, state or local governments.

3. Urging Legislation to Restrict Campaign Financing and to Provide Public Funding (11)

Whereas: the United States Supreme Court has overturned restrictions on corporate spending to support or oppose political candidates and eliminated many of the restrictions on campaign spending by corporations and unions; and

Whereas: the President of the United States has called this decision "a major victory for big oil, Wall Street banks, health insurance companies and other

powerful interests that marshal their power every day in Washington to drown out the voices of everyday Americans” (New York Times. Jan.21, 2010); and Whereas: this disproportionate corporate influence on our political process poses a dire threat to democracy in America,
Therefore Be It Resolved: That legislation be passed to require public financing for all political campaigns.

4. Urging Public Funding to Replace Private Funding for All Elected Offices (6), (11)

Whereas: The public interest too often loses out to corporate interests because of the present system of funding candidates for public office; and
Whereas: Private funding is often through powerful lobbyists; and
Whereas: A recent poll found that 84% of North Carolina citizens believe that “the large amount of money that politicians raise for political campaigns is a major cause of corruption in government” and
Whereas: Due to the actions of a few elected officials, the NCDP and its candidates are being tarred with charges of corruption; and
Whereas: In its recent decision in the Citizens United case, the U.S. Supreme Court permitted corporations to make independent expenditures in elections, allowing them to spend unlimited amounts to attack candidates who threaten their interests and to pay off their supporters with favorable ads; and
Whereas: North Carolina has led the way in the South and the Nation in widening opportunities for early voting, protecting the integrity of the voting process, and establishing voter-owned elections; and
Whereas: Publicly-financed candidates have appeared on North Carolina ballots since 2004, and publicly-financed campaigns have increased the public’s confidence in the officials elected through these campaigns; and
Whereas: A recent poll found 54% of Republicans and 72% of Democrats support tax-funded public campaign option for candidates; and
Whereas: Voter-owned elections allow candidates to establish clearly their loyalty to the people, rather than large donors, when they seek office,
Therefore Be It Resolved: That this body call on our Legislative Delegation to work to pass the following bills now pending in the Legislature:

- House Bill 120 (cosponsored by Reps. Fisher and Go forth), which expands a pilot program for publicly funded municipal campaigns;
- Senate Bill 966 (authored by Sen. Nesbitt), which would expand our voter-owned election program to

include elections for almost all Council of State races; and
■ House Bill 1493 (cosponsored by Rep. Fisher), which would create a pilot program for publicly financed State Legislative races; and
Be It Further Resolved: That this body calls on our state legislative delegation to commit to establishing public financing for all state legislative races and the races for governor and lieutenant governor by 2012.

5. In Opposition to Extending and Expanding the Instant Runoff Voting Pilot Program (13)

TABLED

Whereas: Democrats recognize the importance of fair, transparent and verifiable elections; and
Whereas: An Instant Runoff Voting (“IRV”) pilot program was passed in 2006 for use in 2007 through 2009, but only used in two municipal elections in 2007 and one in 2009; and
Whereas: There is no state or federally certified election system in North Carolina that can tabulate IRV, leading the State Board of Elections to declare in March 2007 that IRV was too risky to use in statewide elections in 2008; and
Whereas: A low-turnout primary runoff in June 2008 was the pretext to rush through an extension to the original IRV pilot – extending it to 2011; and
Whereas: The N.C. State Board of Elections continues to advocate using uncertified automated IRV tabulation procedures without the permission of vendor ES&S, which might have voided the warranty with our state – making voters liable for the expenses incurred with any election meltdown,
Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP and elected and appointed Democratic officials urge the North Carolina General Assembly not to extend the IRV pilot project beyond 2011; and
Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP and elected and appointed Democratic officials urge the Democratic members of the North Carolina General Assembly to withhold any further endorsement of IRV and oppose IRV because it has endangered election integrity and public confidence in elections in North Carolina.

E: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

1. Urging Considering Environmental Impacts by all Governmental Decision Making Bodies (5)

Whereas: If the six states of the Southeast were viewed as a country, it would be the 7th largest contributor in the world to global warming due to our over-dependence on gasoline-guzzling cars and

trucks, sprawling development patterns and coal-burning power plants; and
Whereas: The health of North Carolina's mountains and streams is deteriorating as evidenced by the inclusion of the Cape Fear wetlands and North and South Carolinas's Catawba-Wateree Basin on a national environmental organization's annual list of the Top Ten Endangered Places in the Southeast; and
Whereas: Poor air quality affects public health negatively and increases national health costs by more than a hundred billion dollars annually,
Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP, North Carolina's State Legislature, and state and local government agencies acknowledge the Grassroots' concern for our environmental health and use environmentally based decision making on all related issues, thereby improving water and air standards, increasing green-product-related economic opportunities and establishing North Carolina's move into a leadership position in the "Green Revolution."

2. Urging Recognition of Global Climate Change in Policies Adopted by the NCDP (6)

Be It Resolved: That the NCDP acknowledge that Global Climate Change represents a real and long-term challenge facing all residents of Guilford County, the State of North Carolina, the United States of America and Planet Earth, and that the rapid change in climate conditions on the Planet is directly precipitated and exacerbated by actions of the human species; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP evaluate all recommended solutions to political, environmental and social problems in such ways that the short-term and long-term impacts of such solutions on the global climate are clearly taken into account and that actions which increase the factors that make global temperatures rise or degrade the sustainable environmental patterns will be linked to other actions which mitigate their impact.

3. Urging Prohibiting All NC Coal-Fired Electric Generating Plants from Using Coal Extracted by Mountaintop Removal (MTR) Mining Process (11)

Whereas: The Appalachian Mountain region is a vital wildlife habitat and an economic and cultural resource for the citizens in the South East and the entire US; and

Whereas: Mountaintop removal mining destroys the Appalachian Mountains by flattening the peaks, over 470 so far, and by stripping thousands of acres surrounding each project site; and

Whereas: More than 2,000 miles of streams have already been buried or polluted by MTR waste; and
Whereas: The public health of nearby communities has been harmed by airborne particles as well as by toxics released into the waterways by the MTR process; and,

Whereas: A bill banning the use of MTR-mined coal was introduced in the 2009 NC General Assembly with 31 sponsors; and

Whereas: Nine other states have taken similar actions; and

Whereas: The State of North Carolina consumes more MTR coal than any other state,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP strongly support the prohibition of the use in NC of MTR coal by the utilities and encourage the NC General Assembly to pass such legislation.

4. Urging Responsible Climate Stabilization at 350 ppm of CO₂ (2), (4)

Whereas: Humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted; and

Whereas: Paleoclimate evidence and ongoing climate change suggest that, to preserve our planet, CO₂ will need to be reduced from its current 385 parts per million (ppm) to at most 350 ppm; and

Whereas: To achieve the 350 ppm target, scientists have calculated that the major industrialized nations need to cut their CO₂ emissions by 40% from 1990 levels by 2020; and

Whereas: The Obama administration is seeking the equivalent of a 4% CO₂ emissions cut from 1990 levels by 2020; and

Whereas: The climate bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as legislation currently pending in the Senate, would eliminate EPA's authority under the Clean Air Act to designate greenhouse gases as criteria air pollutants and to set a cap on such emissions; and

Whereas: International and national governing bodies are failing to be responsible and to take the necessary action to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call on our local, state and national representatives to take any and all necessary actions required to facilitate climate stabilization by reducing CO₂ to less than 350 ppm of CO₂ in the atmosphere in a socially just manner by 2020.

5. Urging Banning Use of Plastic Bags Statewide by the End of 2010 (1) (3)

Whereas: Although recycling of plastic bags is available currently, many bags are not recycled and end up as unsightly litter on roadways and open spaces, detracting from the natural beauty of our state which citizens and tourists equally enjoy; and

Whereas: Plastic bags often end up in our rivers and creeks, threatening wildlife, marine life and commercial fishing, an important industry in our state; and

Whereas: Farming in agricultural areas is also negatively impacted when these bags end up in the fields damaging, equipment and the crops being harvested; and

Whereas: The economy in the eastern part of our state, based on fishing, farming and tourism, depends on an environment that is clean; and

Whereas: Eliminating destructive and unsightly plastic bags is a small step toward protecting both our economy and the environment; and

Whereas: Reusable cloth bags or recycled paper bags offer a far better and cleaner option for transporting goods from a store,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support the efforts of the counties in North Carolina to ban the use of plastic bags statewide by the end of 2010; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP support the inclusion of all our counties under the existing N.C. legislation.

6. Urging Canceling Duke Energy's Proposed New Coal Plant at Cliffside (2), (4), (11)

Whereas: Duke Energy has proposed and been approved for a new and much larger coal-fired unit at Cliffside, 60 miles west of Charlotte; and

Whereas: Said facility will discharge 6 million tons of uncontrolled carbon dioxide each year – more than 12 times more than the four small units to be retired – along with 10 times more mercury, and 13- to 50-fold increases in toxic metals such as arsenic and cadmium; and

Whereas: Medical research has yielded compelling evidence that toxins emitted by coal-fired industry can adversely affect human health

- By increasing the rate of hospitalization of children with respiratory disease by up to 300% (Amer. J. Pub. Health, 79:623, 1989);
- By causing an up to 12 times increase in the risk of death by heart attacks and strokes, particularly in women of an age to be mothers and grandmothers (New Eng. J. of Med., 356:447, 2007); and

- By creating conditions that can result in infertility, premature birth and miscarriage (Human Reproduction, 20:2776, 2005); and

Whereas: A coal-fired plant is no longer the cheapest option when the health costs imposed on North Carolina Citizens are considered; and

Whereas: The new Cliffside plant would double the amount of water presently evaporated from the Broad River to 21 million gallons a day – more than that used by the City of Durham; and

Whereas: Every statewide environmental organization in North Carolina that works on energy or climate change issues opposes the plant; and

Whereas: Even though Duke Energy has agreed to build a highly sophisticated and environmental state of the art facility and to eliminate several older plants, there is no such thing as truly “ clean coal”; and

Whereas: Duke Energy's CEO Jim Rogers has stated: “As the third-largest coal consumer in the United States, and one of the largest greenhouse-gas emitters, Duke Energy has a responsibility to be part of the solution”; and

Whereas: Dr. James Hansen, the head of NASA's Goddard Institute of Space Studies and the nation's foremost climate change expert, has stated:

“...stopping this new coal plant is the best thing North Carolina can do to slow global warming”; and

Whereas: Energy experts have repeatedly brought before the N.C. Utilities Commission and legislative bodies data that demonstrate that the new generation capacity from this plant is not necessary and that proven methods of energy conservation, cogeneration, and wind and solar power can meet projected energy demand,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP :

- Strongly support cancellation of the Cliffside coal power plant unit 6;
- Strongly urge our state and local Democratic parties, upon passage of this resolution, to notify Duke Energy's CEO Jim Rogers of members' views;
- Strongly urge Governor Perdue, legislative leaders and North Carolina Democratic candidates for office to halt construction and/or operation of the plant; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP insist that our governmental leaders actively pursue transition to real, meaningful, and substantial renewable and environmentally sound energy choices such as wind, water, and solar power.

7. Urging Energy Efficiency in All State Government Facilities (11)

Whereas: The scientific community is in virtual agreement that global warming is taking place and that the consumption of energy by industrial, commercial, transportation and household uses is a significant contributor through the generation of greenhouse gases by burning fossil fuels; and
Whereas: The improvement of efficiency in the use of energy is the fastest way to reduce the consumption of energy and associated generation of greenhouse gases,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That NC government convert all of its facilities, processes and transportation services to the highest efficiency that can currently be achieved by the year 2020; and
Be It Finally Resolved: That all new public and private users of energy be required to meet the same standards, and that incentives, including taxes, rebates and mandatory goals be provided to upgrade all existing private facilities, processes and systems.

8. Urging Democratic Support for Better Regulation of Causes of Pollution (11)

Whereas: Cap and trade emissions programs elsewhere have proven difficult to manage and verify; and

Whereas: Pollution has caused more deaths than all of our wars combined and is said to be responsible for over 80% of all chronic health problems; and
Whereas: Regulations protecting human health have been grossly inadequate and have done too little too late; and

Whereas: The previous administration's primary efforts were to suppress science, destroy the EPA's environmental libraries, and deregulate environmental protections,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Democratic Party endorse an overall "Precautionary Principal" (safety first) approach to regulation of chemicals and pollution that requires products and processes be determined to be safe prior to sale or use rather than counting bodies later; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the Democratic Party endorse creation of a carbon and pollution tax system to encourage energy conservation in a manner that will be equitable for all businesses and consumers.

9. Urging NCDP Support for Open and Accessible Beaches on The Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area (3)

Whereas: The Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area (CHNSRA) was conceived by Congress and signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1937 as America's first National

Seashore with the promise that people would always have access for recreation; and

Whereas: A vibrant tourism-based economy has evolved in Dare County mainly because CHNSRA contains significant undeveloped ocean frontage; and
Whereas: Access to and enjoyment of the beaches of the CHNSRA is a fundamental component of the

seashore experience and is the foundation of the area's economic base upon which thousands of families depend for their livelihood; and

Whereas: In July of 2007, the National Park Service (NPS) adopted an Interim Protected Species Management Plan (Interim Plan) to protect wildlife and the nesting habitats on the CHNSRA while still providing for public access to the most popular beaches of the area; and

Whereas: In October 2007, environmental groups filed suit in U.S. Federal Court seeking to restrict access to large areas of the CHNSRA resulting in a Consent Decree issued in April of 2008 by the US Federal District Court modifying the Interim Plan and resulting in the periodic closure to the public of large areas of the CHNSRA; and

Whereas: The extensive beach closures resulting from the Consent Decree have created significant economic hardship to businesses and working families in the area and disrupted activities that have been responsibly enjoyed by locals and visitors for generations; and

Whereas: S. 1557 co-sponsored by Sen. Kay Hagan (D-NC) and H.R. 718 co-sponsored by Rep. G. K. Butterfield (D-NC) would invalidate the mandates contained in the Consent Decree and reinstate the Interim Plan in the CHNSRA; and

Whereas: S. 1557 and H.R. 718 will restore public access and improve economic conditions by reinstating the Interim Plan until the NPS establishes final rules in a long-term management plan for the CHNSRA,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support open public access for all to the CHNSRA consistent with the intent of the original 1937 legislation; and
Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP find that reinstating the Interim Plan will be the most effective method of preserving access to the Cape Hatteras National Seashore Recreational Area and improving economic conditions in Dare County; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP support immediate enactment of S. 1557 and H.R. 718 until a long-term Management Plan is implemented by the National Park Service.

10. Urging NCDP Support for Creating an Independent Statewide Energy Efficiency

Program, NC Save\$ Energy (House Bill 1050) (1), (2), (3), (4), (6)

Whereas: Energy costs for residents, business and industry are rising, and do not reflect all of the externalized health and environmental costs of centralized power plants or fossil fuel combustion by vehicles; and

Whereas: The only truly clean energy is energy that is not used; and

Whereas: The cost of implementing energy efficiency and conservation measures is much lower than the cost of current centralized power production, lower than renewable sources and still lower as compared to centralized power plants being constructed or planned; and

Whereas: Low income residents of NC are disproportionately impacted by living in older and less efficient homes, and paying a higher percentage of income for energy costs; and

Whereas: Installation of energy conservation and efficiency improvements would generate thousands of new local “green collar” jobs in NC; and

Whereas: Energy efficiency and other “demand-side” programs implemented by the investor-owned utilities create a built-in conflict with the purpose of those power utilities to sell power; and

Whereas: Six other states (ME, VT, OR, NY, NJ and WI) have demonstrated the effectiveness of independent efficiency programs that have saved millions of dollars in energy costs for ratepayers and natural gas customers, while substantially reducing greenhouse gas and toxic emissions; and

Whereas: Legislation known as *NC SAVE\$ ENERGY* (H1050) to create an independent energy efficiency non-profit administrator financed by a small fee on residential power bills and focused on creating energy savings for low and moderate income residents, retrofitting publicly owned buildings such as schools and non-profit hospitals, and creating green jobs has been introduced in the NC General Assembly and is before the House in the upcoming short session,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge the NC Legislature and Governor Perdue to strongly support *NC SAVE\$ ENERGY* (H 1050).

11. Urging NCDP Opposition to Nuclear Power Generation Until and Unless Nuclear Waste from Power Generation Can Be Safely Handled and Disposed Of (5), (13)

Whereas: The White House has proposed a revival and expansion of the nuclear power industry by planning for the building of new reactors to generate electrical power in the US; and

Whereas: The disposal of nuclear waste presents significant and severe long-term environmental hazards to people and animals, regardless of whether nuclear power plants can be made fail-safe; and
Whereas: Currently, we have over 200 gallons of ‘hot’ water and more leaking everyday that we are not tracking but should be.

Whereas: The White House has presented no plan for the safe disposal of this waste; and

Whereas: The transportation of nuclear waste is potentially dangerous to citizens and our environment; and

Whereas: Nuclear power is not financially attractive to power companies without major subsidies from the federal government, including accident insurance (the Price Anderson Act),

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP oppose the revival of nuclear power production in the US without a plan for safe and environmentally sound handling and disposal of nuclear waste.

12. Urging NCDP Support of Legislation to Protect NC Well Users and Groundwater as a Safe Future Resource (13)

Whereas: More than 2.7 million NC residents depend on private wells for their daily water supply; and

Whereas: Private wells installed before July 1, 2008 have no state requirements for inspection or testing for biological or chemical contamination; and

Whereas: There is no state law requiring that well users be notified of nearby groundwater contamination, and no comprehensive statewide database with information about groundwater contamination to allow the public or health officials to determine if well water may be at risk from spreading contamination; and

Whereas: There are a number of underfunded and understaffed environmental regulatory programs in NC. inadequately monitored contaminated sites, and extremely limited funding for testing wells or assisting low and modest income residents with replacement safe water,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support legislation to require:

- Bilingual door to door notification of well users of any contaminated site within 1500 feet of their well and assistance with testing for suspected contaminants;
- Creation of a comprehensive statewide database of all contaminated groundwater sites and staff positions as needed to carry out these functions;
- An increase in funding for notification and public education about potential contaminants, well-testing for suspected contaminants, proactive

aquifer studies for natural and man-made contaminants, and safe replacement water supplies of at least \$2M per year for at least five years;

- Prioritizing notification and testing for as many well users near potential sources of contamination as possible; and
- Cost effective safe replacement water of up to \$10,000 per household for well repair, drilling new wells, hookups to public water lines, and filtration systems for residents far from water lines, with a priority on spending for residents with household incomes less than 3 times the federal poverty level.

13. Urging NCDP Support of Strong Rules to Protect All Drinking Water Reservoirs and Strong Local Accountability for Preventing Pollution of Downstream Waters (13)

Whereas: Water quality in several of the NC's drinking water reservoirs has been impaired by excess nutrients, sediment and other pollutants from several sources; and

Whereas: Upstream communities must accept financial and ecological accountability for their various activities, including:

- Rapid and high impact residential and commercial development, increased impervious surface;
- Failing sewage collection and treatment systems, destruction of vegetative covers and other land disturbances;
- Use of unnecessary or excess fertilizers, de-icing chemicals and pesticides that contribute to downstream degradation of public waters; and

Whereas: It is both more just and cost-effective to take measures to prevent this pollution than to force downstream communities to undertake expensive treatment of their water supplies,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP and NC communities shall support strong rules to protect all actual and potential drinking water sources and take responsibility for implementing strong and cost-effective measures to prevent polluted runoff and other discharges to public waters through

- Low impact development ordinances, storm water regulations and fees;
- Innovative rain gardens, other neighborhood-scale storm water treatment and retention features;
- Adequately funded maintenance for all sewage collection lines;
- Minimal disturbance of land and vegetation; and
- Establishing and protecting vegetative cover within 50 or more feet of all waters.

F: FEDERAL CONCERNS

1. Urging NCDP Efforts to Assure Protection of Human Rights by our Government (2), (4)

Whereas: The US was founded on the belief in inalienable rights for all persons and the US has subsequently reiterated an official belief in human rights through such actions as a constitutional Bill of Rights, trials for war criminals following World War II, incorporating human rights into the United Nations Charter, and signing onto the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and

Whereas: Over the past nine years, the US government has ignored or repudiated many human rights, from spying on citizens to enunciating a right to imprison and detain persons indefinitely without charges, to treating prisoners inhumanely, and even to enunciating a right to carry out assassinations, Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge our Democratic President and Members of Congress to observe human rights as defined in applicable documents, treaties, common law, and historical record, including the Constitution of the United States of America, and to reject all claims of dictatorial privileges for any elected or appointed official; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That any persons whose rights are not currently being observed according to the U.S. Constitution and treaties entered into by the U.S. receive immediate relief as appropriate, as, for example, by being charged if imprisoned, and receiving humane treatment while imprisoned.

2. Urging NCDP's Advocacy for Internet Neutrality (2), (4), (13)

Whereas: The Internet developed with significant public support and has come to constitute a valuable public infrastructure; and

Whereas: Commercial providers of Internet access are seeking power to limit Internet use by imposing differential fees that would remove the ability of citizens, non-profit groups, small businesses, and other non-moneyed interests to use the infrastructure; and

Whereas: The President has stated a policy of support for Internet neutrality,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge Democratic members of Congress to make Internet neutrality the law of the land; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That Congress give the Federal Communications Commission jurisdiction over Internet access service providers.

3. Urging Democratic Support for Pursuing an Anti-Militaristic Foreign Policy (2), (4)

Whereas: The US alone spends 48% of the entire world's expenditures on the military; and
 Whereas: The US owns or rents between 700 and 800 military bases worldwide, in about 130 foreign countries; and
 Whereas: The US military has accomplished neither the claimed strategic nor political objectives in Afghanistan and Iraq, a shortfall which demonstrates that a massive military is not a successful approach for pursuing US interests abroad; and
 Whereas: Pursuit of militaristic adventures has been used to justify abrogating the human rights guaranteed under the Constitution, from repudiation of habeas corpus and the right to a fair trial without coerced self-incrimination to domestic warrantless spying, rejection of Congressional oversight through a "state secrets" doctrine, and practices on prisoners which are criminal under international law; and
 Whereas: The extraordinary expenditures, the abridgment of freedom, and the forfeiture of moral leadership constitute the most real and present danger to the American Republic; and
 Whereas: The security of our Republic can be strengthened by promoting the common welfare of its people through education, health care, adequate retirement and economic security, adequate public infrastructure, and adherence to human rights and freedoms,
 Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Democratic Party turn away from militarism as the primary instrument of foreign policy; and
 Be It Finally Resolved: That the Democratic Party support an expeditious withdrawal of American forces from Iraq and Afghanistan.

4. Urging Withdrawal of US Troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, Halting Offensive Operations, Promoting Regional Diplomacy, and Channeling Aid through Indigenous and Multilateral Agencies (4), (13)

Whereas: The US is involved in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and
 Whereas: War brings death and destruction and often plants the seeds for future aggression and hostility; and
 Whereas: War does not create understanding and resolution of underlying problems; and
 Whereas: National leaders have not always provided truthful reasons for entering war; and
 Whereas: Wars rob nations of peoples' lives, both militants and increasingly civilians, destroy cultures and drain finances; and
 Whereas: Survivors are often emotionally and physically crippled for life; and

Whereas: Wars can lead to the increased risk of the use of nuclear weapons having the power to destroy our planet; and
 Whereas: The emphasis on the use of US contractors has deprived Iraqis and Afghans of jobs and led to excessive fraud and waste; and
 Whereas: These wars have been going on for almost nine years, have caused billions of dollars to be diverted from dire domestic needs including hunger, homelessness, and lack of medical care, and have impoverished public education and left millions unemployed,
 Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call for an exit strategy to:

- Continue withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq and begin withdrawal from Afghanistan; and
- Halt offensive operations and support political reconciliation among all Iraqi and Afghan groups; and
- Engage Iraq's and Afghanistan's neighbors, including Iran and Pakistan, to promote reconciliation and regional security; and
- Channel US development aid through Iraqi, Afghan and multilateral organizations.

5. Urging NCDP Support for Efforts to Promote Nuclear Arms Control and Reduction (4)

Whereas: Nuclear weapons constitute a threat to the national security of the USA; and
 Whereas: Nuclear weapons present a unique threat to the climate and the security of the American people and the peoples of all nations on Earth, a hazardous threat that could potentially lead to the eradication of life on Earth; and
 Whereas: Maintenance of America's nuclear arsenal of 5,500 warheads and supporting installations costs US taxpayers \$52 billion per year that could be invested in job creation, economic stimulus, education and/or health care; and
 Whereas: The Jason Defense Advisory Report by an independent group of scientists found no evidence that aging of nuclear weapons compromised their certification and that upgrading the US nuclear arsenal is not necessary to maintain weapon reliability ["Lifetime Extension Program" JSR-09-334E, Sept. 9, 2009, The MITRE Corp., McLean, VA]; and
 Whereas: The unique threat inherent in nuclear weapons has been recognized by a bipartisan succession of American presidents who have negotiated a series of treaties to limit the dangers of nuclear weapons; and
 Whereas: President Barack Obama announced his joint initiative with President Dmitry Medvedev of

the Russian Federation to reduce the number of nuclear weapons and to achieve the goal of “a nuclear free world”; and

Whereas: The USA is the only nation ever to use atomic weapons in war and therefore is uniquely obligated to take the lead in freeing all peoples from the ominous threat of nuclear weapons by setting an example for other nations to follow; and

Whereas: President Obama has announced that the United States and Russia have agreed to

- Reduce the number of long-range warheads to 1,500;
- Convene a summit conference to prevent the diversion of nuclear arms to terrorism; and
- Strengthen the global non-proliferation regime,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge the Obama Administration to:

- Pursue the total elimination of nuclear arsenals in the USA, the Russian Federation and all nuclear powers including: China, France, India, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United Kingdom;
- Replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with a new legal and binding treaty that will require the total elimination of nuclear weapons on a global basis;
- Strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the international protocols for the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction;
- Secure all nuclear weapons and materials while safer, sustainable sources of energy are being developed and deployed;
- Support the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the IAEA Safeguards System;
- Intensify international cooperation to combat nuclear terrorism and promote the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism;
- Work for Congressional ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; and
- In accordance with the Jason Report affirming current nuclear weapon reliability, delete the budget item to upgrade nuclear weapons.

6. Urging NCDP to Call On Sen. Hagan and Our Congressmen to Vote for Bills to Phase Out the Use of Military Contractors (4)

Whereas: More than 22,000 US Government Contractors are operating in Iraq and Afghanistan, where some have killed civilians and participated in torture at Abu Ghraib and other detention facilities and others have been employed for tasks not legally contractible under US Law; and

Whereas: Contractors have wasted billions of taxpayer dollars while engaging in legally and ethically questionable activities and outright theft and fraud; and

Whereas: Oversight of contractors is desperately needed for economic, human rights, and security reasons; and

Whereas: Senator Bernard Sanders has introduced S3023 and Representative Janice Schakowsky has introduced HR 4650, a companion bill, that would ban private security contractors from performing military, security, law enforcement, intelligence, and armed rescue functions; and

Whereas: These bills also impose better transparency requirements on existing contracts, so firms that still have contracts would be forced to report their activities more frequently and would be under better Congressional oversight,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call on Senator Kay Hagan to support S3023 and the Democratic Congressional delegation to co-sponsor HR 4650, bills to phase out the use of private military contractors.

7. Urging NC’s Congressional Delegation to Vote to Redirect Military Spending to Meet Critical Domestic Needs (4)

Whereas: The Administration has called for increasing the FY11 baseline Pentagon budget by 3.4% but freezing \$447 billion in discretionary spending; and

Whereas: Many proposed weapons programs are duplicated, unnecessary, untested, and subject to massive cost overruns; and

Whereas: Public dollars invested in clean energy, education, health care, and rebuilding the nation’s infrastructure will create up to twice as many jobs as Pentagon spending in Iraq and Afghanistan and far more jobs than equivalent dollars spent on military weapons systems [Robert Pollin, “How to End the Recession,” The Nation, Nov. 24, 2008],

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge the NC Congressional delegation to support measures to end the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and redirect military spending to create more domestic jobs through clean energy, education, health care, and rebuilding infrastructure for the U.S., Iraq and Afghanistan.

8. Urging NCDP Efforts for Reform of US Senate Rules (4)

Whereas: Current US Senate rules allow one member to block the Senate’s consideration of issues that are important to the entire nation,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP demand reform of the US Senate rules so that – except when otherwise specified in the Constitution – a simple majority will prevail.

9. Urging NCDP Support for Comprehensive Immigration Reform Now (2), (4), (6), (11)

Whereas: We are a nation of immigrants founded on the ideas of human rights and equality with a long tradition of welcoming immigrants and recognizing the importance of their many contributions to our nation's rich and varied economic, cultural, social, political and religious life; and

Whereas: Congress has failed in its responsibility to overhaul our broken and out-dated immigration system, and the current enforcement-only approach not only falls far short of addressing the complex economic and social realities of immigration but has led to unequal protection under the law which is contrary to our belief in the fundamental fairness and proportionality in governmental actions; and

Whereas: The resulting criminalization of a large portion of our immigrant community has resulted in civil and human rights violations that are unconstitutional, are contrary to our values and traditions, and are needlessly harsh; and

Whereas: The systematic dismantling of the social safety net in lieu of real reform by denying undocumented immigrants drivers' licenses, non-discriminatory police protection, fair and safe working conditions, access to higher education and basic health care threatens the public safety and public health of all our communities; and

Whereas: Programs and practices that attempt to solve the immigration problem in a piecemeal fashion often do more harm than good because they create an environment of fear and distrust in our immigrant communities and put the most vulnerable populations--women and children, the elderly and the disabled--at greater risk as domestic violence, child abuse, gang activities, robberies and other serious crimes will go unreported, thus destabilizing and endangering the whole community; and

Whereas: History shows that new waves of immigrants pose far less danger to America than do the accompanying efforts to compromise our constitutional rights in order to block the integration of the latest wave of immigrants into our communities,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call on President Obama and the US Congress to make it a top priority to pass comprehensive immigration reform that honors our laws, our heritage as a nation

of immigrants, and our shared humanity and which includes:

- Effective and humane immigration enforcement at the borders and in the interior;
- A steep reduction in the immigration backlogs to help speed up family reunification goals;
- A path for undocumented youth who entered the US as children to adjust their status, as the Dream Act would provide;
- A realistic path to legal residency and eventual citizenship for immigrants in good standing already living and working in the US;
- An improved immigration process for future immigrant workers;
- A moratorium on ICE raids on the workplaces and homes of immigrants until new legislation is enacted;
- Rigorous restrictions on 287(g) and secure communities programs and similar Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between local law enforcement and Homeland Security to limit detention and deportation efforts to remove only dangerous criminals rather than persecute workers and tear hardworking families apart;
- An overhaul of immigration detention center practices with added oversight and transparency to ensure that the human rights and human needs of detainees are protected at all times and that grievances will be addressed promptly and effectively;
- Community-based alternatives to detention facilities, especially for families with children;
- Effective and rigorous sanctions against employers who profit from exploiting immigrant workers by failing to pay a living wage or pay overtime; refusing to comply with occupational and health standards; failing to carry workman's compensation insurance or offer medical benefits; excluding immigrant workers from receiving pensions and other benefits accorded non-immigrant employees;
- Support for immigrant workers' rights to organize into unions to protect their rights as established by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and sanctions for corporations who deny these rights; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP strongly urge county governments, Governor Perdue, legislative leaders and NC Democratic candidates for office to take a public stand in support of this resolution and to halt practices and programs that are contrary to the 14th Amendment of our Constitution which affirms the inherent dignity and humanity of foreign-born U.S. residents, regardless of their immigration status.

10. Urging NCDP Support for Ending Our Country's Use and Sponsorship of Torture (4)

Whereas: Acts of torture violate US criminal laws, specifically the federal Anti-Torture Statute and the Federal War Crimes Act of 1996, and violate international treaties to which the US is a party, including the Geneva Conventions, the Convention Against Torture, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and

Whereas: All acts of torture, regardless of circumstance, are immoral, unjustified, and illegal; and

Whereas: Torture has been demonstrated to be ineffective and counterproductive in obtaining accurate information to be used in a court of law; and

Whereas: The right to be free of torture is a fundamental human right recognized in both constitutional and international law; and

Whereas: US-sanctioned torture is not justified by our national security needs because it engenders hatred against the nation, does not keep the country safe, shames the nation, endangers US troops abroad and citizens at home and is proven not to work; and

Whereas: Subcontractors of the US Government including Aero Contractors Ltd. and Blackwater (XE Services LLC) of North Carolina, among others, acting on behalf of the United States, have been implicated beyond reasonable doubt in the practices facilitating torture by providing services and illegal activities in support of torture,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call on our national leadership to eradicate current torturous practices by the United States in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo as well as in US-controlled prison facilities elsewhere; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP call on US Senators Kay Hagan and Richard Burr and the NC delegation in Congress to ban the US's policies and practices of torture through appropriate and immediate legislative restraints; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the NCDP call upon the Governor and the Attorney General and the NC State Legislature to investigate, to report to the People of NC, and to prosecute if any of these alleged activities have violated NC law.

G: HEALTH CARE

1. Urging NCDP Opposition to the Privatization of Medicaid (4)

Whereas: Medicaid provides critical health care for NC's least advantaged citizens; and

Whereas: The recession has placed enormous pressure on our state government to reduce its budget; and

Whereas: Privatizing Medicaid has been a strategy that some states, including Florida and Colorado, have adopted to cut costs; and

Whereas: Privatizing the public mental health system in NC has been a failure; and

Whereas: The privatization of Medicaid in other states has resulted in reduced care; and

Whereas: The Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC) network is a nationally recognized program to improve care and reduce costs in Medicaid and should not be replaced; and

Whereas: Scarce public resources should be directed toward patient care and not toward administrative costs, executive pay, and Wall Street profits of private companies,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP ask Gov. Beverly Perdue and our representatives in the NC General Assembly to oppose any efforts to privatize Medicaid in NC.

2. Urging Inclusion of Abortion Benefits in All North Carolina Municipal Employee Benefits Plans (4)

Whereas: Municipal governments need to offer competitive benefits packages to employees to attract qualified individuals in public service; and

Whereas: Broad-spectrum reproductive benefits, including legal abortion, are part of usual and customary benefits packages in the private sector; and

Whereas: Access to full reproductive services is a constitutionally protected right for every woman and to deny female employees abortion benefits may constitute gender discrimination,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That municipal governments in NC should not be prohibited from offering abortion benefits to their employees, nor should such benefits be specifically excluded from municipal employee benefit plans.

3. Maintain Funding Support for Mental Health Services in North Carolina (4)

Whereas: North Carolina currently ranks 43rd in per capita funding for mental health and the current status of inadequate resources and funding for services provided to citizens of North Carolina who struggle with mental illness, developmental delays or substance abuse issues should not be exacerbated with additional funding cuts; and

Whereas: In last year's budget new positions were established at institutions in order to correct the

problems that led to loss of federal accreditation and cutting those same positions is unwise as we will lose more than we gain (as a result of the loss of accreditation at Broughton Hospital, we lost roughly \$1 million per month and at Cherry Hospital, we lost \$800,000 per month); and

Whereas: Emergency rooms and Sheriffs search for open beds for admitting involuntary commitment patients into psychiatric facilities and spend in excess of 24 hours without finding a treatment facility; and

Whereas: These services and programs should receive parity of financial support from both public and private healthcare insurance (as passed in recent legislation from the U.S. House of Representatives); and

Whereas: North Carolina continues to under fund community services; and

Whereas: Gov. Perdue's budget plan of \$26 million in cuts to the mental health community perpetuates the disparity in funding that is causing most of the ills in our system when our community services must be built up,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the North Carolina Democratic Party instruct our county and state elected officials to

- Maintain funding for the Wright School or the Whitaker School. These programs and the services they provide to families in North Carolina are vital to essential behavior modification/re-training for youth who already struggle at home, in school and in their communities; and
- Maintain funding in state budgets that serve people who struggle with mental illness, developmental delays or substance abuse issues and find a way to increase funding sources for these vital programs; and
- Maintain funding for educational programs that provide services and support for special needs children in North Carolina and find a way to increase funding sources for these vital programs; and
- Make the mental health care of NC citizens a high priority for funds, provision of services and accountability.

4. Urging NCDP to Support Medicare for All (4)

Whereas: Every person in NC and the entire US deserves access to affordable, quality health care; and

Whereas: Affordable, quality health care is becoming increasingly unavailable because health insurance premiums and deductibles have increased in excess of inflation in the last decade and will likely continue to increase; and

Whereas: Even Americans who are now insured often experience burdensome medical debt and sometimes life-threatening delays in obtaining health care; and

Whereas: Many Americans live in terror of becoming sick since medical debt is a leading cause of bankruptcy and causes approximately 500,000 bankruptcies annually affecting 2 million Americans; and

Whereas: Private health insurance systems typically spend approximately 33 percent of their cost on administration, in contrast to less than 3 percent typically spent to administer universal "single-payer" systems such as Medicare; and

Whereas: Other industrialized countries are able to cover all their citizens and report better medical outcomes on many measures yet spend half of what America spends per person on medical care; and

Whereas: The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that at least 45 million Americans did not have health insurance in 2008; and

Whereas: Many studies have shown that the uninsured are less likely to get necessary health care and prescription drugs than those with insurance, and a recent Harvard study attributed about 45,000 deaths to this lack of health care each year; and

Whereas: The number of preventable hospital stays (preventable if people received proper medical care) has increased in the last two decades and that number is increasing faster among the uninsured than among the insured; and

Whereas: A 2008 Urban Institute report showed 27,000 excess deaths in 2006 from cancer alone among uninsured Americans; and

Whereas: In 2008, Archives of Internal Medicine reported that almost 60 percent of US physicians supported government legislation to establish National Health Insurance; and

Whereas: COBRA is unaffordable because it takes over 30% of a laid-off worker's monthly unemployment benefits to buy individual coverage and 82% to buy family coverage, and the 24.7 billion dollars of tax payer money allocated in the stimulus to provide a 65% subsidy of health care insurance premiums paid to for-profit insurers for the unemployed under the COBRA program for the next nine months would be better invested in expanding Medicare to include the unemployed in a publicly-funded, not-for-profit program; and

Whereas: "Medicare for All" would remove \$350 billion - \$400 billion per year from health care costs nationwide and save about 45,000 Americans from premature death,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support permitting all residents of the US to purchase medical and dental health insurance through Medicare; and Be It Further Resolved: That in the interest of smooth transitions, this program be 1) voluntary, 2) staggered by age (e.g. decrease the age of eligibility by 5 years every year over a period of 14 years until it achieves universal coverage); and

Be It Further Resolved: That in the interim, as long as the insurers provide supplemental insurance, the NCDP urge the NC Secretary of State and Commissioner of Insurance to immediately demand full public disclosure of the financial position and administrative cost structure of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, which holds 53 percent of our state's commercial market, and United Health Group Inc., which holds 20 percent of our state's commercial market; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the NC Congressional Delegation to urge them to cosponsor "Medicare for All" legislation.

5. Urging NCDP Support for Obama's Health Insurance Guarantees (11)

Whereas: 1,750,000 are uninsured today in NC and 1,480 North Carolinians lose health coverage every week because of rising costs; and

Whereas: The average family premium in North Carolina costs \$1,400 more because our system fails to cover everyone; and

Whereas: Our broken health insurance system will cost the NC economy as much as \$8.3 billion this year in productivity losses due to lack of coverage,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support President Obama's health insurance guarantees:

- No discrimination for pre-existing conditions;
- No exorbitant out-of-pocket expenses, deductibles or co-pays;
- No cost-sharing for preventive care;
- No dropping of coverage for seriously ill;
- No gender discrimination;
- No annual or lifetime caps on coverage;
- Extended coverage for young adults; and
- Guaranteed insurance renewal.

6. Urging NCDP to Oppose Efforts by Congress to Create a Special Commission to Study Financial Problems of Social Security and Medicare (2), (4)

Whereas: Self-styled "fiscal conservatives" have predicted imminent bankruptcy for Social Security and Medicare since the inception of each program, with the first such prediction published in 1936, and have recently renewed these predictions; and

Whereas: Medicare's financial problems arise from the unsustainably inefficient American market in medical goods and services and not Medicare itself; and

Whereas: Self-styled legislative and administrative deficit "hawks" are calling for a bipartisan commission to recommend raising F.I.C.A. taxes and cutting benefits; and

Whereas: A fiscal task force called a "debt reduction panel" or "blue ribbon commission" makes it possible for the federal government to easily make substantial cuts to Social Security and Medicare with impunity; and

Whereas: Any commission that convenes behind closed doors circumventing the normal legislative process and fast tracking legislation, leaving no room for debate, constituent input or amendments is fundamentally undemocratic and a betrayal of the American people; and

Whereas: In creating such a commission Congress avoids any political accountability, as many commission supporters have expressly stated they desire, most especially if action on commission recommendations does not occur until after the November, 2010 elections, thereby insulating Congressional incumbents from political fallout; and Whereas: Social Security did not cause the debt problem and should not be eviscerated to solve it, Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge Democratic members of Congress to vote against any so-called "entitlement reform" that directly or indirectly reduces security or benefits in Social Security; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the financial problems facing Medicare be resolved in favor of medical industry reforms to make healthcare accessible for all Americans; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP urge the President of the United States and our members of the 111th Congress to ensure any debt reduction measures are undertaken as part of the normal legislative process, not with a commission whose agenda includes slashing Social Security and Medicare.

7. Urging NCDP Support for an Inquiry into Blue Cross -Blue Shield (4)

Whereas: Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina (BSBCNC) is registered as a non-profit-nonpartisan organization; and

Whereas: BSBCNC is not registered as a lobbyist and has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on robo calls to solicit opposition to health care reform; and

Whereas: BCBSNC raised the cost for policy holders to cover the cost of its efforts to oppose health care reform; and

Whereas: Seventeen members of the North Carolina General Assembly requested that the Attorney General of North Carolina investigate the matter, Therefore Be It Resolved: That the State of North Carolina take whatever action is necessary based on the results of the inquiry should that inquiry find violation of the laws of North Carolina and/or Federal Laws; and

Be It Further Resolved: That we request that the NC Insurance Commissioner review the rate increases from BCBSNC in terms of whether said rate increases were legal or were only for political purposes.

8. Urging the NCDP to Support a State's Right to Provide Public Health Care Insurance Option for its Citizens (2), (4)

Whereas: A state government-authorized public health care insurance option will not make a profit, immediately reducing health care costs by 10 - 30%; and

Whereas: A state government will have enormous negotiating leverage with drug companies and health care providers, further reducing costs in a more competitive marketplace; and

Whereas: NC has many citizens who cannot afford health care insurance and without a public insurance option, there is no true reform to reduce costs, Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP insist that our government leaders support allowing any state's right to maintain a public health insurance option if it already has one, and support allowing any state seeking to establish a public health care option to create one; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP instruct our NC elected officials to authorize establishing a health care public insurance option to expand the choice for our NC citizens.

9. Urging NCDP Support for a Single Payer Health System (6), (11)

Whereas: Almost half of US bankruptcies are a result of health care costs; and

Whereas: Health care costs for businesses cause an undue burden on their finances; and

Whereas: US health care costs are among the highest among developed nations and the quality among the lowest; and

Whereas: There are approximately 47 million uninsured people in the US; and

Whereas: General practice physicians bear an unfair burden under the current system,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support a single payer health care system like those that have proven successful in countries as diverse as Taiwan and Canada.

10. Asking the Legislature to Eliminate Bureaucratic Maneuvering and Pass NC House Bill 1380, An Act to Enact the Medical Marijuana Act

Whereas: A resolution to support NC HB 1380, *The Legalization of the Use of Medical Marijuana when Prescribed by a Licensed Physician*, was passed at the August 29, 2009 State Executive Committee Meeting;

Whereas: The Veterans Administration, in view of the above medical evidence, has recognized the benefits of Medical Marijuana (Cannabis) and is editing it's pain management contracts to specifically exclude medical marijuana;

Whereas: PTSD is one of the single most difficult disorders to treat and Medical Marijuana has had such success in treating it that it now accounts for over 25% of New Mexico's patients;

Whereas: North Carolina has one of the largest veteran populations in the country;

Whereas: The US Conference of Mayors passed, unanimously, a resolution calling for improved treatment and harm reduction, including removal of barriers to treatment of PTSD and other war wounds with medical marijuana;

Therefore Be It Resolved: The Democratic Party of North Carolina take immediate steps to affect passage of legislation to legalize medical marijuana and to remove these barriers to treatment with medical marijuana for veterans and other patients whose doctors determine the treatment to be appropriate; and

Be It Further Resolved: That a copy of this resolution be sent to each member of the North Carolina House of Representatives, each member of the North Carolina Senate, The Council of State, and the Governor.

H: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Urging Continued Democratic Party Concern for Victims in Darfur (7)

Whereas: Millions of people are trapped in the squalid and unhealthy refugee camps in the Darfur

region of Africa with no hope of ever being able to go back to their home villages and towns; and Whereas: The attention and publicity that once focused on this tragic situation has almost completely vanished,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call upon the leaders of the US and of all civilized countries to take immediate action to end this great humanitarian crisis; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That we encourage all Democrats to frequently visit the web site www.SaveDarfur.com to stay informed about developments in Darfur.

2. Urging NCDP Support for Peace Initiatives in the Middle East (2), (4)

Whereas: President Obama is determined to restore a strong economy at home and address the social calamity too many Americans face today; and

Whereas: The President's commitment to Americans at home is deeply dependent on helping end wars abroad including in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere in the Middle East; and

Whereas: Reducing the overall cost of the military budget and ending overseas conflicts is essential if the country is to have productive jobs at home and expand investments for the public good; and

Whereas: President Obama has appointed a nationally respected emissary, George Mitchell, to help bring an equitable and just resolution to the Middle East Conflict and assure justice and security for both Israelis and Palestinians; and

Whereas: The conflict has brought loss of life and even greater insecurity to Israelis and has exacted untold suffering and death among Palestinians living in Gaza, East Jerusalem, the West Bank and those living within Israel; and

Whereas: Voices in Congress and in the faith and social justice communities are now saying that any peace accord will depend upon

- Ending the occupation of Palestine;
- Removing the Israeli settlements in the West Bank;
- Lifting the blockade of Gaza;
- Redirecting current US billions for military aid to social and economic development for both Israeli and Palestinian neighbors;
- Ending Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes; and
- Bringing all interests to the table to negotiate a just solution,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP urge support for President Obama's peace initiatives in the Middle East based upon the principles enumerated

above and call on Congressional leaders to raise their voices and direct their votes toward this effort.

I: JUSTICE CONCERNS

1. Urging NCDP Support for an Amendment to the North Carolina State Constitution (4)

Whereas: Women constitute 51% of the population, 51% of voters, a large percentage of the workforce, and more than half of college graduates; and

Whereas: It took NC 52 years (1919-1971) to pass the 19th amendment to the US Constitution, giving women the right to vote; and

Whereas: NC is now, and should continue to be, a leader among the 50 states,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP call upon the NC State Legislature to pass a state constitutional amendment supporting equal rights for women and underrepresented minorities to read:

“The state of North Carolina shall not deny or abridge equality of rights under law on account of gender. Any existing law using an exclusive gender reference shall be construed to include protection and/or benefits for both men and women, without further change or amendment.”

2. Urging NCDP Support for a Homeless Bill of Rights in our State (4)

Whereas: Communities across the nation are experiencing unprecedented economic crises; and

Whereas: According to the NC Department of Health and Human Services, “thousands of people in North Carolina are affected by the problem of homelessness”; and

Whereas: Adequate and permanent shelter is a basic need, and its absence has a deleterious effect upon physical and mental health, personal development, and the ability to exercise individual rights and obligations; and

Whereas: Groups who have historically been discriminated against such as ethnic minorities, persons with mental illness, women, children and youth, have been disproportionately affected by the lack of affordable and suitable housing; and

Whereas: The number of individuals and families who are without permanent shelter continues to grow, and the number of people at high risk of becoming homeless is even larger; and

Whereas: According to the 2009 the NC Interagency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs (ICCHP) annual point-in-time survey, 12,746 people were identified as homeless including 3,621 people in families, 2,245 of whom were children; and

Whereas: 940 identified themselves as veterans of military service, 1,639 identified themselves as having a serious mental illness, 3,332 identified themselves as having a substance use disorder, 1,131 identified themselves as being victims of domestic violence; and

Whereas: No person should be deprived of a decent quality of life or subjected to discrimination because they are homeless,

Therefore Be It Resolved: That we exert efforts to end homelessness by increasing access to affordable permanent housing, increasing efforts to ensure jobs pay a living wage, adequate support for those who cannot work, appropriate facilities and services for persons with substance abuse and mental illness, access to affordable health care, access to quality educational opportunities, outreach and crisis assistance and transitional housing; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the NCDP support the passage of a Homeless Bill of Rights by the NC General Assembly guaranteeing that no citizen is denied the right to a quality life, full of purpose, because of their housing status.

3. Urging NCDP Support of the North Carolina Ex-Offender Reentry Study Bill (4), (13)

Whereas: North Carolinians depend on their government to maintain their safety and security and expect it to be reliable and fair in addition to being effective at deterring crime and punishing offenders; and

Whereas: Nearly 1 million individuals in NC have a criminal record; and

Whereas: Approximately 40,000 individuals are currently in NC prisons, the vast majority (80%) non-violent offenders; and

Whereas: 98% of incarcerated individuals will eventually leave prison and return to their communities; and

Whereas: NC's prison population has more than doubled over the past 25 years; and

Whereas: Approximately 28,000 individuals entered and 27,000 were released from NC prisons in 2008; and

Whereas: Approximately 50% of those leaving prison will be re-arrested within three years; and

Whereas: The NC Department of Corrections has an annual budget of \$1.3 billion, which includes the cost of \$27,000 per individual per year of confinement; and

Whereas: The cost of prison construction is approximately \$80,000 per bed; and

Whereas: The NC Department of Corrections projects a shortage of 6,000 beds within the next ten years if incarceration continues at its current rate; and
Whereas: The current system of incarceration and re-incarceration is failing too many, including victims of crime, costing too much, and helping too few,
Therefore Be It Resolved: That the NCDP support the Ex-offender Reentry Study Bill in the General Assembly (House Bill 527; Senate Bill 496) of Representative Garland E. Pierce to create a committee to study and report to the General Assembly by 2011 on effective means to facilitate the reentry of prisoners to civilian life.

4. Urging Requirement for Open Meetings by Boards of County Commissioners Under NC Law: § 143-318.9. Public Policy (11)

Whereas: It is the public policy of NC that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of the government be conducted openly; and

Whereas: State law contradicts this good advice when it allows closed meetings to discuss industrial relocation "incentives" that are paid with tax funds; and

Whereas: The People deserve and require that any business that affects the health and environment be fully disclosed; and

Whereas: Counties have used closed meetings with corporations seeking public tax incentives to prevent citizens from becoming informed or from expressing their concerns regarding the history, background, and intentions of these non-citizen, for-profit-only corporate entities; and

Whereas: Closed meetings with non-citizen corporations place elected officials at odds with the citizens they purport to serve; and

Whereas: Poor decisions resulting in adverse effects on health, environment, and the economy of our communities have resulted from the lack of citizen input caused by closed meetings and lack of public oversight; and

Whereas: Corporations have had a history of bribing officials with business trips (paid vacations), revolving door job opportunities and lucrative business associations that can take place more easily behind closed doors; and

Whereas: Thomas Jefferson correctly said, "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate power of society but the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion."

Therefore Be It Resolved: That in every county and at all levels of state government there shall be no

closed meetings to discuss potential industry processes or incentives that may affect the health, environment or economy of the citizenry; and
Be It Further Resolved: That the only closed meetings allowed shall be in cases of employment or pending law suits; and

Be It Finally Resolved: That the following North Carolina Law § 143-318.11. defining permitted closed sessions shall be null and void: *“(a) Permitted Purposes (4) To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations.”*

5. Urging the NCDP to Work to Abolish the Death Penalty or at Least to Continue a Moratorium on the Death Penalty (6)

Whereas: A number of those sentenced to death later have been proved to be innocent; and
Whereas: Objective analysis has shown that the death penalty has not been applied equally; and
Whereas: The death penalty has been proven to be much more expensive than life without parole;
Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Democratic Party work to abolish the death penalty or at least to continue a moratorium on the death penalty.

6. Urging Increased Funding of County Court Systems (4)

Be It Resolved: That in an effort to keep more hardened criminals off our streets, we ask for increased funding for our county court systems so that we can hire more district attorneys, judges and staff to support our overburdened courtrooms.