

## **Resolution in opposition to the Seattle City Council's proposed aggressive solicitation law**

**[Passed by the 34<sup>th</sup> District Democrats April 14, 2010]**

**Whereas**, the City Council has proposed an "Aggressive Solicitation" ordinance that gives the police broad power to issue citations to groups or individuals they consider to be soliciting or panhandling in such a way that causes persons to feel "compelled to give," and

**Whereas**, such vague language is overly broad and invites selective enforcement and discrimination especially against people of color and those who are poor, and

**Whereas**, there are laws already on the books which police can use to explicitly target criminal and assaultive street conduct including laws against assault, trespass, property defacement, theft, stalking, menacing, malicious harassment, obstruction, and even littering, public drinking, urination, pedestrian interference, and expectoration, and

**Whereas**, the Seattle Human Rights Commission has issued a report that states a) the bill raises due process concerns with disparate and negative impact to the most vulnerable members of our community, b) data provided do not reasonably support the factual findings as stated in the bill, and c) recommend the Council not vote for passage of the bill, and

**Whereas**, police, courts, and jail resources should be focused on curbing real crime, not clogging our system with people whose only crime is that they are poor and caught in the broad net of this ordinance,

**Therefore be it resolved**, the 34<sup>th</sup> District Democrats express their strong opposition to Seattle City Councilmember Tim Burgess's "Aggressive Solicitation" Ordinance and shall forward a letter to this effect to Councilmember Burgess, other members of the City Council, and the Mayor, and,

**Be it further resolved**, that the 34<sup>th</sup> District Democrats call on the City Council and Mayor instead to commit more of our city's time and resources towards real solutions such as preserving and expanding our city's affordable housing stock, adding livable wage jobs, and increasing community-based drug, alcohol, and mental health treatment.