

RESOLUTION ENDORSING WASHINGTON FAMILIES STANDING TOGETHER AND VOTE TO APPROVE REFERENDUM 71 TO RETAIN WASHINGTON STATE'S DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP LAW

This resolution was passed and endorsed by the 34th District Democrats at our regular meeting on August 12, 2009

WHEREAS, in 2007, the Washington State Legislature passed and the Governor signed legislation establishing Domestic Partner registration in the State of Washington, and provided rights and responsibilities for domestic partners such as the right to hospital visitation and other critical health care and inheritance issues;

WHEREAS, in 2008, the Washington State Legislature passed and the Governor signed legislation that expanded Domestic Partnership rights and responsibilities, giving domestic partners standing under laws covering probate and trusts, community property and guardianship;

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Washington State Legislature overwhelmingly passed and the Governor signed the Domestic Partnership Expansion Law of 2009 including all the remaining rights and responsibilities currently provided to married couples by the State of Washington;

WHEREAS, the Domestic Partnership Expansion Law provides essential rights and responsibilities to gay and lesbian couples who are denied the right to legally marry and couples where at least one partner is 62;

WHEREAS, these rights include death benefits for the partners of police and firefighters killed in the line of duty; pension benefits for the partners of teachers and other public employees; victims' rights, including the right to receive notifications and benefits allowances; the right to use sick leave to care for a seriously ill partner; the right to workers' compensation benefits if a partner is killed in the course of employment; and the right to receive unemployment benefits if an employee must leave a job to care for a seriously ill partner;

WHEREAS, more than 5,000 domestic partnership registrations have been filed, in every county in Washington State, providing essential protections to families;

WHEREAS, A group of socially conservative activists have filed signatures with the Secretary of State to qualify Referendum 71 to keep the Domestic Partnership Expansion Law of 2009 from going into effect and to repeal the law;

WHEREAS, Referendum 71 asks the question should the Domestic Partnership Expansion Bill of 2009 (SB5688) be APPROVED or REJECTED;

WHEREAS, a majority of voters voting to 'reject' on Referendum 71 would result in over 5,000 couples in the State of Washington being denied the over 200 protections already enjoyed by legally married couples and thereby denied equal protection under the law;

WHEREAS, repealing the Domestic Partnership Law is contrary to the beliefs and platform of the Democratic Party and our belief in equality, fairness and supporting all families;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Democratic Party of the **34th Legislative District** in the State of Washington endorses the Washington Families Standing Together Campaign and urges all voters to Approve Referendum 71 in order to retain the Domestic Partnership Law.