**Utilize Existing State Presidential Primary to Allocate Delegates**

WHEREAS the caucus occurs at most every four years and is not a well-understood event by the public at large;

WHEREAS the caucus creates numerous barriers to voting by requiring a physical presence and substantial time commitment at the specific location, on the specific day and time chosen;

WHEREAS the surrogate affidavit form that allows absentee voting is very limited in scope and must be actively sought online and is not automatically mailed to a voter as in an election;

WHEREAS many people are denied an opportunity to vote due to the in-person only caucus, including but not limited to, out-of-town and out-of-state students, people with emergent situations, irregular work schedules, vacations and privacy concerns;

WHEREAS the caucus system is not conducted consistently across the state due to the lack of experienced and trained volunteer PCOs available to cover every precinct;

WHEREAS the barriers and methods of the caucus system disenfranchise many potential voters, especially younger voters, reducing the overall participation to at most 4-5% of eligible voters;

WHEREAS the State of Washington conducts a Presidential Primary that could offer all voters an opportunity to participate in the nomination of major political party presidential candidates via a mail in ballot that is mailed to every registered voter;

WHEREAS the existing Washington State Presidential Primary requires voters to subscribe to a specific party declaration insuring only those that consider themselves to be a Democrat can vote for a Democrat as is also true for the caucus;

WHEREAS the Secretary of State keeps a record of party declarations for a period of 60 days following the certification of the Presidential Primary, during which time party officials or any member of the public may request the record of party selections making it possible for the Washington State Democratic Party to have a record of Democrat voters;

WHEREAS using the results of the Washington State Presidential Primary to allocate delegates would open the door to allowing an earlier primary making Washington State more influential in the selection of the presidential nominee;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Democratic Party should use the results of the mail-in Presidential Primary to allocate delegates.

Sources:

(1) DSAAP – Washington State Delegate Selection Plan page 21

(2) http://www.electproject.org/home/voter-turnout/voter-turnout-data

(3) <http://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/2016-Presidential-Primary.aspx>

(4) http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/politics/vote-keeps-presidential-primary-late-in-campaign-season/