

1 **Banning Donations from Private Prison Companies**

2 **WHEREAS** the private prison industry in the United States is a multi-billion dollar industry
3 involving approximately 400 companies, 71 of which currently house and supervise immigrant
4 children; and

5 **WHEREAS** private prison corporations enter into contracts with municipalities and the federal
6 government with guarantees that they will receive a minimum “supply” of human prisoners;
7 and

8 **WHEREAS** governmental “must-supply” contracts with private prisons lead to excessive levels
9 of incarceration for non-violent, low-level crimes, unjustly impacting and systematically
10 decimating communities of color; and

11 **WHEREAS** for-profit prisons are not subject to the same oversight that government-run jails
12 and prisons are, and meet profit goals through negligence towards prisoners and maintaining
13 substandard living conditions; and

14 **WHEREAS** the industry spent \$1.6 million lobbying, donating to candidates, and funding
15 super-PACs in 2016, mostly to Republicans, and is on track to spend over a million in 2018; and

16 **WHEREAS** the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency alone spends more than
17 \$2 billion a year on immigrant detention through private jails, and nearly half of the \$3.4 billion
18 paid to these companies in the last four years went to homes with serious allegations of child
19 mistreatment¹; and

20 **WHEREAS** large private prison firms, reorganized as real estate trusts, have received
21 preferential tax windfalls from the 2017 Republican tax bill²; and

22 **WHEREAS** the above conditions create perverse incentives for driving increased unjust
23 incarceration and exploitation of low-level non-violent offenders, and individuals without
24 immigration or citizenship papers, with adverse effects on their families; and

25 **WHEREAS** the interests of private prisons are, in part, driving opposition to common-sense
26 drug law reforms; and

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¹<https://www.opensecrets.org/industries./indus.php?ind=G7000https://www.truthdig.com/articles/immigrant-children-forcibly-injected-with-drugs-lawsuit-claims/>

²<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/28/private-prisons-investors-trump-tax-bill>

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30 **WHEREAS** the Obama administration in 2016 announced it was ending incarceration of federal
31 prisoners in private facilities (but not immigration detainees)³, and both 2016

32 Democratic candidates Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton have called for an end to private
33 prison incarceration⁴;

34 **WHEREAS** as of 2017, three states had banned private prisons - New York, Illinois, and Iowa;
35 and

36 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats call for the abolition of
37 private, for-profit incarceration in Washington State and in the United States; and

38 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic legislative delegation
39 support HR 3844, calling for phasing out existing contracts of the U.S. Department of Justice
40 with private prison companies; and

41 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic legislative delegation
42 support HR 3923, calling for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to establish detention
43 standards and to phase out the use of private detention facilities for aliens in DHS custody; and

44 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats will not accept donations
45 from companies in the for-profit prison industry; and

46 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats call upon the DNC, DCCC,
47 DSCC, and other Democratic-aligned organizations to reject donations from the for-profit
48 prison industry; and

49 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats will provide a copy of this
50 resolution to the DNC, DCCC, DSCC, Democratic legislators, and Democratic candidates within
51 Washington state.

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54 Submitted by the Benton County Democratic Platform Committee to the Benton County
55 Democratic Central Committee (Date Submitted 8/05/2018)

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³ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/aug/18/us-government-private-prisons-use-justice-department>

⁴ https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hillary-clinton-private-prisons_us_562a3e3ee4b0ec0a389418ec