

MITIGATING AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

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3 **WHEREAS** there is a scientific consensus, as established by the Intergovernmental Panel on
4 Climate Change (IPCC) and confirmed by all major scientific bodies, including the National
5 Academy of Sciences, that the continued buildup of anthropogenic (human caused)
6 greenhouse gases from fossil-fuel combustion and certain land use practices threatens the
7 stability of the global climate;

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9 **WHEREAS** climate change poses significant near-term and long-term risks to the
10 environment and in turn the economy of the Pacific Northwest, including Washington State,
11 and to the health and well-being of citizens of the region;

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13 **WHEREAS** agriculture, timber, and fisheries provide the economic and cultural foundation
14 for the Pacific Northwest's rural populations and contribute substantively to the overall
15 economy;

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17 **WHEREAS** climate change impacts already observed include changes in the timing of
18 stream flow as a result of earlier snowmelt, reducing the supply of water for many
19 competing demands — hydropower, fish, irrigation, agricultural, commercial and
20 residential use — and causing far-reaching ecological and socioeconomic consequences
21 including serious flooding;

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23 **WHEREAS** on the Washington and Oregon coasts, the effects of sea level rise, erosion,
24 inundation, threats to infrastructure and habitat, and increasing ocean acidity — already
25 effecting Washington's multimillion dollar shellfish industry — collectively pose a major
26 threat to the region;

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28 **WHEREAS** the 2015 wildfire season was the most extensive and costliest in Washington
29 State history, and the combined impacts of drought, increasing wildfires, insect outbreaks,
30 and tree diseases are already causing widespread forest die-offs;

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32 **WHEREAS** projected warming will increase the probability of heat stress to field crops and
33 tree fruit, and higher average temperatures will exacerbate agricultural pest pressure
34 through expanded geographic ranges, earlier emergence or arrival, and increased numbers
35 of pest generations;

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37 **WHEREAS** although the agriculture sector's technical ability to adapt to changing
38 conditions can offset some adverse impacts of a changing climate, there remain critical
39 concerns for agriculture with respect to costs of adaptation, development of more climate
40 resilient technologies and management, and availability and timing of water;

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42 **WHEREAS** agricultural adaptation and mitigation will require more than piece-meal
43 efforts, and in fact call for coordinated approaches with public-private partnerships;

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45 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Party calls upon
46 leaders at all levels of government to formulate, enact, and support policies, rules, and
47 regulations for intelligent adaptation to and mitigation of climate change effects, including:
48 • removing the competitive advantage of fossil fuel energy by policies that reflect its true
49 costs in the market price placed upon its products and/or operations;
50 • Supporting the Clean Power Plan formulated by President Obama and manifested in
51 rule making by the Environmental Protection Agency;
52 • Promoting tax credits, rebates, and other incentives to support energy efficiency,
53 encourage the development and use of renewable energy sources, and support efforts
54 to conserve energy and lessen pollution through transportation improvements;
55 • Improve water policies, water storage and water management in the state to reflect
56 current and projected water realities;

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58 **THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Party
59 calls upon leaders at all levels of government to formulate, enact, and support policies,
60 rules, and regulations that support research, development, and implementation of policies,
61 systems, methods, and procedures for adapting to or mitigating climate change, including:
62 • Protecting fossil fuel dependent workers during the transition to a renewable energy
63 economy;
64 • reinvesting carbon tax or fee revenues in ways that protect and support workers and
65 vulnerable populations from unfair costs;
66 • investing in repairing and enhancing our infrastructure and building the renewable
67 energy economy, using domestic content whenever available,

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69 **THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that a state economic and environmental justice
70 board be established to facilitate a just transition of the state's economy and environment
71 to the coming climate realities.

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Submitted by Michael Berry and Richard Badalamente to the Benton County Democratic
75 *Central Committee February 11, 2016.*

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