

APPROVED RESOLUTIONS

State Executive Committee

January 28, 2006

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF STRONG STATE ETHICS LEGISLATION

Whereas the recent series of Congressional scandals, combined with revelations about major ethical questions in our state legislature, have reinforced the public concern that our present laws relating to lobbying, campaign finance, gifts to politicians and related practices are far too weak to effectively control influence peddling and corrupting practices in our state government; and

Whereas four-fifths of the states, including North Carolina, provide external oversight of state government through an ethics commission, yet North Carolina is one of six of those states whose commissions do not have authority over the legislature; and

Whereas the special House Committee on Ethics and Government Reform is presently holding hearings with the goal of developing legislation in the short session; and

Whereas the Democratic Party must take the strongest and most principled leadership role on governmental ethics and governmental reform with the goal of assuring that North Carolina state government really is "of, by, and for the people;"

Therefore be it Resolved that the North Carolina Democratic Party strongly urges its legislators, as a matter of the highest priority, to pass sweeping and historic ethics and governmental reform in this session; and that such legislation include at a minimum:

An independent ethics commission with a clear mission to provide ethical conduct rules for both the legislative and executive branches of government, with the legal standing and subpoena power to investigate serious allegations, together with the power to take remedial action when needed; and

A ban on gifts by lobbyists to lawmakers, with very limited exceptions, whether provided outright, or as campaign contributions or assistance in raising campaign money in any form; and

An increase in the "cooling off" period which would require former legislators or state government employees to wait at least two years after leaving office before becoming lobbyists; and

Advancing the effective date for implementation of the lobbyist disclosure laws passed last year from the 2007 session to the 2006 session of the General Assembly.

RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF A LIVING MINIMUM WAGE

Whereas in 1938 the Democratic Party took the lead in passing the Fair Minimum Labor Standards Act that first set a minimum hourly wage; and

Whereas the North Carolina Democratic Party, at its August 27, 2005 meeting of its State Executive Committee in Greensboro, approved a 2005 Platform stating in part that Democrats "support a living minimum wage to ensure that workers can adequately provide for their own well being and that of their families," and

Whereas the State Executive Committee, meeting on that date, unanimously passed a resolution of support for H330: The Living Wage Act, sponsored by Reps. Alma Adams (D-Guilford) and Jean Farmer-Butterfield (D-Edgecombe, Wilson), which would raise the minimum wage in NC to \$8.50 over the next three years, and

Whereas even HB 20, an 85-cent increase in the minimum wage, which passed the House on August 20, 2005, would benefit more than 100,000 workers, half of whom are over 25 years of age; and

Whereas a Gallup poll released in November 2005 showed that 83% of United States citizens favor an increase in the minimum wage;

Therefore be it resolved that the North Carolina Democratic Party strongly endorses all efforts to increase the minimum wage for the lowest-paid workers, and

That the State Executive Committee of the Party urges every Democratic legislator to support and enact an increase in minimum wage and hour compensation that will provide the working poor with the means of acquiring the basic necessities of existence in return for their labor.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF "SAME-DAY REGISTRATION" IN NC

Whereas more than half of the voting-age adults in North Carolina do not generally participate in elections, and voter turnout in our State is below the national average; and

Whereas current North Carolina law requires that citizens register to vote twenty-five (25) days prior to an election; and

Whereas this registration deadline, which is as early as mid-September for municipal elections, is often missed by people of color, youth, rural residents, persons with disabilities, and the poor; and

Whereas states that offer citizens an opportunity to register and vote on the same day enjoy higher voter turnout rates, which exceed the national average by 8 to 15 percentage points; and

Whereas the presence of "early-voting" sites in North Carolina, often equipped with computers, makes it possible to administer same-day registering and voting efficiently while protecting against fraud; and

Whereas the North Carolina General Assembly has considered, in House Bill 851, allowing citizens to register and vote immediately at one-stop polling places, provided they pass a stringent identity verification;

Therefore be it resolved that the North Carolina Democratic Party endorses the concept of Same-Day Registration for North Carolina elections, and urges Democratic legislators to support HB 851, and urges that the practice of Same-Day Registration be phased into immediate use in the 2006 elections, beginning with one-stop, early-voting sites in all one hundred counties and expanding as quickly as feasible to other polling places, so as to ensure an election system that is fully accessible and fair to all.

RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF STATE FUNDING OF THE STATE ENERGY OFFICE

Whereas the State Energy Office has existed for thirty years on funding from petroleum violations escrow funds and some federal funding at no cost to the taxpayers of North Carolina, and

Whereas these funds are about to run out during the next year, and

Whereas the State Energy Office develops and coordinates the State Energy Plan and is the key office in state government promoting energy efficiency and use of renewable energy, and

Whereas the programs and activities of this office resulted in energy savings of over \$13.5 million in 2003-2004 alone, and

Whereas over \$10 billion dollars leaves the state each year to purchase energy resources such as gasoline, natural gas, coal, and nuclear fuel resulting in great impact on our economy, and

Whereas reducing energy use in North Carolina is essential in this time of high air pollution, global warming, increasing energy costs, national security concerns, and the threat of building up to five costly and dangerous new coal and nuclear plants, and

Whereas there is evidence that the utilities are lobbying to eliminate the office,

Therefore be it resolved that the North Carolina Democratic Party strongly urge as a matter of high priority our elected legislators to fully fund the State Energy Office in this year's short session of the legislature.

RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT CLEAN CARS LEGISLATION

Whereas automobiles contribute at least 37% of the state's ozone pollution, and 40% of the state's air toxic pollution; and

Whereas more than 4 million North Carolinians often experience unsafe levels of ozone during the summer months; and

Whereas the transportation sector, which is predominantly cars, contributes one third of North Carolina's greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming; and

Whereas North Carolina already leads the Southeast in cutting pollution from power plants, thanks to the NC General Assembly's Clean Smokestacks bill; and

Whereas the "Clean Cars" Act (H1460/S1006), tracking laws passed in nine other states, would require all new, conventional cars sold in North Carolina to meet tighter emissions requirements beginning in 2009 at an estimated additional cost ranging from \$68 for passenger cars to \$276 for larger trucks and SUVs;

Whereas the current federal emissions standard, called "Tier 2," doesn't help the development and availability of advanced-technology vehicles, while the Clean Cars Act provides a strong incentive for automakers to sell more hybrid electric cars, already in high consumer demand; and

Whereas the Clean Cars Act is estimated to reduce smog-forming nitrogen oxide pollution and toxic pollution by 10% over and above federal emissions standards - the difference between healthy and dirty air for many areas;

Therefore be it resolved that the North Carolina Democratic Party strongly favors passage of HB 1460/ SB 1006, the "Clean Cars" Act, and urges our Democratic Legislators to pass the same in this short session.

Resolution in Support of Increased Funding for the NC Housing Trust Fund

Whereas more than 2 million North Carolinians live in homes they cannot afford; and

Whereas more than 65% of tenants who earn less than \$20,000 cannot afford their rent; and

Whereas the NC Housing Trust Fund finances homeownership for low-income families, rental housing development for families and the elderly, urgent repairs for very low-income homeowners, and development of

housing for homeless persons, individuals with physical and/or behavioral disabilities, and survivors of domestic violence; and

Whereas the NC Housing Trust Fund has improved housing for the state's neediest residents, with 81% of its investments serving North Carolinians earning less than 50% of median income, and has gained national recognition and widespread support from government officials, business leaders, and housing advocates; and

Whereas the current resources of the NC Housing Trust Fund are inadequate, with an appropriation of only \$3 million a year; and

Whereas states such as Florida and Ohio use housing trust funds as a means to spur economic activity and create jobs, in addition to providing needed housing; and

Whereas an appropriation of \$50 million annually for the NC Housing Trust Fund would ANNUALLY house more than 6,000 households, generate more than 3,000 jobs, increase state and local tax revenues by over \$30 million, and leverage a total investment of \$200 million in developing and preserving the state's housing stock;

Therefore be it resolved that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges its legislators to support increased funding of the NC Housing Trust Fund, and to appropriate a minimum of \$10 million annually for that purpose.

Resolution Reaffirming the North Carolina Democratic Party's Support for a Death Penalty Moratorium

Whereas a resolution in support of a death penalty moratorium was passed by the North Carolina Democratic Party State Executive Committee on August 27, 2005; and

Whereas resolutions in support of a moratorium on executions have been passed by 38 local governments, including the cities of Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, Durham, Charlotte, Asheville, and Thomasville, Hillsborough, Cary and Fayetteville, as well as the counties of Guilford, Durham, Orange, Chatham and Bertie; and

Whereas in 2005 the North Carolina State Senate supported a two-year moratorium on executions by passing SB 972; and

Whereas in 2005 the North Carolina House of Representatives did not vote on H529, which, if passed, would have at least created additional legal grounds for stays of executions while North Carolina's application and use of the death penalty was studied; and

Whereas in the fall of 2005 a special commission was created by the Speaker of the House to study the use of the death penalty in North Carolina; and

Whereas on December 2, 2005, Kenneth Lee Boyd, a prisoner on North Carolina's Death Row, became the 1000th person executed in the United States since capital punishment was reintroduced in 1976;

Therefore be it resolved that the North Carolina Democratic Party reaffirms its opposition to continued use of capital punishment unless and until such time as this state implements policies and procedures which:

- Ensure that death penalty cases are administered fairly and impartially in accordance with basic due process;
- Eliminate racial disparities in charging, sentencing and imposition;
- Eliminate the risk that innocent persons may be executed; and
- Prevent the execution of mentally disabled persons and persons who were under the age of 18 at the time of their offenses.

Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Governor and our state representatives.

Resolution to support the impeachment of President George W. Bush , Vice President Dick Cheney, and Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez.