

## **Resolutions Committee Report** **2009 Democratic State Convention**

The Resolutions Committee recommends the following resolutions for adoption by the Convention:

### **Resolution Honoring Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr.**

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. was first elected to Congress by the voters of Michigan's 15<sup>th</sup> Congressional District on December 13, 1955 succeeding his father, John D. Dingell, a New Deal Democrat first elected to Congress in 1932; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. became the longest serving Member of the United States House of Representatives ever on February 11, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. is one of the most productive and influential Members ever to serve in the United States House of Representatives; and

**WHEREAS**, while Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. has served with distinction on several Congressional committees, his service on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, especially as its Chairman and Chairman of its Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, is especially exemplary for its aggressive oversight and legislative productivity; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. is passionate about national health insurance, introducing H.R. 15 to provide national health insurance in every Congress since 1957; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. is a strong voice for other health care legislation, such as the 1965 Medicare Act, 1988 Prescription Drug Marketing Act, Generic Drug Enforcement Act of 1991, Mammography Quality Standards Act of 1992, 1997 State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and a Patient's Bill of Rights; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. is a staunch protector of the environment, through legislation such as the 1961 Wetlands Loan Act, 1964 National Wilderness Act, 1965 Water Quality Act, 1970 National Environmental Policy Act, 1971 Ocean Dumping Act, 1971 Marine Mammal Protection Act, 1973 Endangered Species Act, Superfund Amendments Act of 1986, Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, bills to allow states to regulate out-of-state trash, 2001 Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Establishment Act and 2002 Pipeline Safety Improvement Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. is an energetic advocate for the domestic auto industry and its workers, on issues ranging from the 1979 Chrysler Loan Guarantee and fair trade to mileage standards and the current effort to assist the industry; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. is a firm supporter of the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively, and has supported pro-labor legislation throughout his career, including the Employee Free Choice Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. is a strong believer in civil rights supporting among other legislation the 1957 and 1964 Civil Rights Acts, the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the Equal Rights Amendment and affirmative action, while opposing the 2001 Patriot Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. has worked diligently on energy issues, passing dozens of bills on petroleum, coal, solar, natural gas, uranium, power plants, recycling and so forth, including the landmark Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 and Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. has been an effective overseer of the financial industry through committee hearings and legislation such as the Insider Trading Sanctions Act of 1984 and the Insider Trading and Securities Fraud Enforcement Act of 1988; and

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. has, throughout his life and career, been a loyal Democrat, vigorously advancing the Party's policies and successfully assisting its candidates up and down the ticket in every election.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party at its February 21, 2009 State Convention honors and thanks Congressman John D. Dingell, Jr. for his extraordinary tenure in the United States House of Representatives and his outstanding service to the people of his district, Michigan and the United States.

### **Resolution In Support Of President Obama's American Recovery And Reinvestment Plan**

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party recognizes that the United States is in an unprecedented economic crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, President Obama has presented the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan to the United States Congress; and

**WHEREAS**, the Obama Administration intends to:

- create three to four million jobs over the next few years;
- accelerate the creation of a clean energy economy;
- lower health care costs, cut medical errors, and improve medical care;
- renovate and modernize 10,000 schools, invest more in Pell Grants to make college affordable for seven million more students, provide a \$2,500 college tax credit to four million students, and triple the number of fellowships in science to help spur the next generation of innovation;
- repair and modernize thousands of miles of America's roadways and provide new mass transit options for millions of Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, America's economic crisis cannot be solved through budget cuts and tax cuts alone. An attempt to solve it through only tax cuts would threaten America's vital services such as education, health care and safety and would cause our struggling economy even more harm.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party states for the record its support of President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan.

### **Resolution Supporting The Employee Free Choice Act**

**WHEREAS**, in 1935, the United States established, by law, that workers must be free to form unions; and

**WHEREAS**, the freedom to form or join a union is internationally recognized by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a fundamental human right; and

**WHEREAS**, the free choice to join with others and bargain for better wages and benefits is essential to economic opportunity and good living standards; and

**WHEREAS**, unions benefit communities by strengthening living standards, stabilizing tax bases, promoting equal treatment and enhancing civic participation; and

**WHEREAS**, states in which more people are union members are states with higher wages, better benefits and

better schools; and

**WHEREAS**, union workers receive better wages and benefits, with union workers earning 29 percent more than workers without a union, 35 percent more likely to have access to health insurance, and are four times more likely to have access to a guaranteed defined benefit pension; and

**WHEREAS**, unions help raise workers' pay and narrow the income gap for minorities and women, by increasing median weekly earnings by 31 percent for union women workers, 31 percent for African-American workers, 50 percent for Latino workers, 9 percent for Asian American workers; and

**WHEREAS**, workers across the nation are routinely denied the freedom to form unions and bargain for a better life, with 25 percent of private-sector employers illegally firing at least one worker for union activity during organizing campaigns; and

**WHEREAS**, 77 percent of the public believes it is important to have strong laws protecting the freedom for workers to make their own decision about having a union, and 58 percent of workers would join a union if they had the chance; and

**WHEREAS**, employers often refuse to bargain fairly with workers after forming a union by dragging out first contract bargaining for up to two years in 45 percent of successful campaigns; and

**WHEREAS**, each year millions of dollars are spent to frustrate workers' efforts to form unions, and most violations of workers' freedom to choose a union occur behind closed doors, with 78 percent of employers forcing employees to attend mandatory anti-union meetings; and

**WHEREAS**, when the right of workers to form a union is violated, wages fall, race and gender pay gaps widen, workplace discrimination increases and job safety standards disappear; and

**WHEREAS**, a worker's fundamental right to choose a union free from coercion and intimidation is a public issue that requires public policy solutions, including legislative remedies; and

**WHEREAS**, the Employee Free Choice Act has been introduced in the U.S. Congress in order to restore workers' freedom to join a union; and

**WHEREAS**, the Employee Free Choice Act will safeguard workers' ability to make their own decisions with these abuses, provide for first contract mediation and arbitration, and establish meaningful penalties when employers violate workers' right; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party 2008 Platform sanctions the development of an Employee Bill of Rights including the Employee Free Choice Act.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the Employee Free Choice Act which would authorize the National Labor Relations Board to certify a union as the bargaining representative when a majority of employees voluntarily sign authorizations designating that union to represent them; provide for first contract mediation and arbitration; and establish meaningful penalties for violations of a worker's freedom to choose a union and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that we urge Congress to pass the Employee Free Choice Act to protect and

preserve for America's workers their freedom to choose for themselves whether or not to form a union.

### **Resolution Opposing So-Called "Right To Work" Laws**

**WHEREAS**, the best interests of Michigan and its citizens are served by promoting fair labor practices and working in harmony with labor unions; and

**WHEREAS**, 22 states have so-called "right to work" laws that prohibit workers and employers from negotiating union security clauses that ensure that all workers who receive economic benefits from union representation share the costs of such representation; and

**WHEREAS**, so-called "right to work" laws do not guarantee employment to workers; and

**WHEREAS**, so-called "right to work" laws weaken the ability of all workers to participate in the collective bargaining process; and

**WHEREAS**, so-called "right to work" laws harm all workers alike by depressing union membership and limiting the effectiveness of collective bargaining; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics the median household income in 2005 in "right to work" states was \$5,900 less than in free-bargaining states; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2005 the percentage of the population without health insurance was 20% higher in "right to work" states; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party 2008 Platform sanctions the development of an Employee Bill of Rights precluding so-called "right to work" laws; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Congress is seeking to impose a federal National Right to Work Act that would require all states to become so-called "right to work" states; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Legislature has introduced legislation that would convert Michigan into a so-called "right to work" state; and

**WHEREAS**, a threatened ballot proposal would convert Michigan into a so-called "right to work" state.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party opposes any legislation in the U.S. Congress, the State of Michigan Legislature, or any statewide ballot proposal that would make Michigan a "right to work" state; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the federal Taft-Hartley Act should be amended to prohibit state "right to work" laws.

### **Gay Pride Month Resolution**

**WHEREAS**, our great state protects its residents from discrimination and harassment based on actual or perceived race, color, religion, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, physical or mental ability, medical condition, sex, but not gender identity or sexual orientation; and

**WHEREAS**, while our great state and nation have come a long way in our journey toward dignity, understanding, and mutual respect for all, we still have a long way to go in eradicating the prejudice and discrimination that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people face; and

**WHEREAS**, each year in June marks the anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion that gave birth to the modern lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender civil rights movement and all those committed to justice and equality celebrate during the month of June the notable achievements and outstanding service that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans make to our great state and nation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party proclaims June as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month, and encourages all people of Michigan to work to advance the cause of equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

### **Resolution In Support Of A State-Wide Ban On Smoking In Workplaces**

**WHEREAS**, the 2006 U.S. Surgeon General’s report stated the only way to protect consumers and employees from deadly exposure to secondhand smoke is through comprehensive smoke free workplace policies; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2006 Air Quality Tour showed that nonsmoking sections do not adequately protect Michigan consumers and employees from deadly secondhand smoke; and

**WHEREAS**, 12,000 otherwise healthy nonsmokers will die each year from some form of cancer – 3,000 specifically because of secondhand smoke exposure; and

**WHEREAS**, secondhand smoke is the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing about 50,000 nonsmokers every year, according to the California Environmental Protection Agency; and

**WHEREAS**, during a poll of 400 registered Michigan voters, 79% said they would go to restaurants “more often” or “just as often” if they become smokefree; and 70% of respondents indicated the same about bars, clubs and bowling alleys; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates the cost savings of eliminating secondhand smoke in the work place to be between \$35 billion and \$66 billion a year; and

**WHEREAS**, studies across the country prove that smokefree laws benefit business; and

**WHEREAS**, after New York went smokefree in March 2003, the Department of Finance reported 10,600 new jobs in the city’s bars and restaurants between March and December 2003; and tax receipts increased by 8.7%, or approximately \$1.4 million; and

**WHEREAS**, similarly in Florida, receipts for taverns and bars that served food remained unaffected by the state’s smokefree law; and

**WHEREAS**, there are 21 well-designed studies that show no negative economic impact from smokefree policies in restaurants and bars ([www.vctc.org.au/tc-res/Hospitalitysummary.pdf](http://www.vctc.org.au/tc-res/Hospitalitysummary.pdf)); and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan’s government already regulates several areas of workplace and restaurant policies in the name of public health. Employees should not be forced to sacrifice their health because they need to earn a paycheck; and

**WHEREAS**, food service workers are 50% more likely to develop lung cancer, due largely to the fact that they are exposed to secondhand smoke while on the job; and

**WHEREAS**, a Michigan smokefree workplace law is supported by more than 70 organizations, including the Michigan Health and Hospital Association, Michigan State Medical Society, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and American Lung Association and is strongly supported by Michigan voters; and

**WHEREAS**, in a statewide poll conducted in 2005, 63% of Michigan voters supported a smokefree workplace law, while only 23% opposed. Fourteen percent are neutral; and

**WHEREAS**, a MIRS poll conducted in February 2007 showed 61% of Michigan voters support smokefree buildings, including restaurants and bars; and

**WHEREAS**, smokefree air is good for Michigan's health; and

**WHEREAS**, smokefree air is good for business; and

**WHEREAS**, both the House and Senate had passed different versions of House Bill 4163, the bill was sent to a conference committee to work out the differences. (The House had passed a version with exemptions in 2007; the Senate passed a version with no exemptions in 2008); and

**WHEREAS**, the leadership from each chamber was unable to work together on a final bill.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party make it a priority to get similar legislation enacting a statewide ban on smoking in workplaces, including restaurants and bars, passed this year.

### **Resolution Supporting Universal Single-Payer Health Care**

**WHEREAS**, Representative John Conyers, Jr. (MI-14) has introduced H. Res. 676, "United States National Health Insurance Act (or the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act)", a bill to expand Medicare to the benefit of all citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, health care should be a right, not a privilege; and

**WHEREAS**, there are at least 40 million of our citizens, particularly workers, children and the poor who have no access to regular health care or are forced to use emergency services which costs nearly \$100 billion a year; and

**WHEREAS**, almost all Western countries have established universal, single-payer health systems and have found they are cost-effective and promote better health than the current systems in this country; and

**WHEREAS**, analyses of the costs for such a system have repeatedly shown that the adoption of such a system would result in lower costs and complete coverage of all the citizens of our country; and

**WHEREAS**, the Medicare and Veterans health care systems have demonstrated that these systems could be extended to all the people and be used as a framework for an efficient and workable system; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of medical care is increasing at an unsustainable rate and also is seriously inhibiting the development of all business, small and large, to the growing costliness and rejection of American products in the world market; and

**WHEREAS**, the performance of the American health care system is producing poorer results in the preservation of the health of our citizens than almost all Western systems;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Democratic Party immediately begin the development of a universal, federal, single-payer system of health care such as H. Res. 676, which would protect and cover all citizens of all ages. This system will be based on the present Medicare system which demonstrates efficient and affordable health care for our senior citizens; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that in this system there be provisions against brutality, discriminatory neglect and involuntary active and passive euthanasia on the basis of disability, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation by health care institutions and providers; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the present Medicare drug system be changed to require that this system be authorized and required to negotiate low cost drugs with all drug manufacturers.

### **Resolution Supporting An Employees' Bill Of Rights**

**WHEREAS**, individuals should have the freedom to exercise and express their Constitutional rights and be able to improve their careers and talk and meet with other potential employers without fear of losing their livelihood and represented workers have mechanisms and processes by which to protect their livelihood while the non-represented professional employee do not; and

**WHEREAS**, the current laws which were meant to protect non-represented employees (i.e., Disability, ERISA, Family Medical Leave and Non-Discrimination) have been decimated in the courts by corporate tyrants; thus, it is impossible for non-represented employees to find justice and fairness; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no mechanism or process to appropriately resolve disagreements between the non-represented professional employees and the company regarding earned benefits and how they can be used, "off-shoring" non-represented professional employee functions without concern or input from the non-represented employee, an increasing number of corporations are unilaterally reducing and restructuring health care insurance and retirement benefits as well as other benefits (i.e., permitted sick time, vacation time, overtime, etc.) the non-represented professional employee has no legal standing to object and/or protest these changes and is thus disenfranchised; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan's unemployment rate is above the national average and a large number are non-represented employees, and the non-represented employee makes up a large portion of the taxpaying middle class; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan needs to retain, nurture and grow its professional work force, and the Michigan Democratic Party is in support of establishing a more educated and professional work force in the State of Michigan, and has always stood with the worker whether that worker is a professional non-represented worker or not; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan wants to broaden its economic base and encourage entrepreneurial start-ups and those start-ups are primarily created with non-represented employees; and

**WHEREAS**, there is an effort to make Michigan a "Right To Work" state which, if successful, will result in a major economic decline, it is imperative, in order to maintain the integrity and security of the Michigan workforce, that Michigan codify an Employees' Bill of Rights which will once and for all put an end to any effort to make Michigan a "Right To Work" state; and

**WHEREAS**, Senator Glenn Anderson and others made an effort in 2007 and submitted some initial legislation (i.e., Workers First (SB 457-465), a package of bills that proposed an initial set of changes to hiring laws to protect both employers and employees from unfair hiring practices) and in 2007 the House passed HB 4532, 4887, 4926 and 4927 which are "Employee Privacy Protection Acts" but they did not pass the Senate nor do they completely address the issues; and

**WHEREAS**, in the "2006 Michigan Democratic Party Platform" and most recently in the "2008 Michigan Democratic Party Platform" in the section titled "A. Opportunity – (10) Income: Rewarding Work" states "Pass

an Employee Bill of Rights. Employees need protection from work – related discrimination based on off-duty conduct such as family status, health of family members, political activities, membership in lawful organizations, credit history, firearm ownership and so forth. Employers have made employment decisions up to an including discharge based on matters unrelated to work, which infringes on the workers’ civil liberties:, and, in the section titled “B. Community – (2) Social Justice: Achieving Equal Treatment Under Law” it states “We would like to create a Non-represented Workers Bill of Rights. We support the right of non-represented workers to a fair, equitable, collaborative and economically healthy work environment which will enable a shared accountability between employer and non-represented employees for the betterment of the economic environment in Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, the near future political environment both locally and nationally offers an opportunity for the Michigan Democratic Party membership and leadership to espouse and enact legislation which supports the Democratic values and beliefs; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan is actively encouraging new industries to come to Michigan, it should simultaneously encourage individuals to come to Michigan to live and pursue their careers by establishing an environment which respects the employees right to make a living without fear of corporate tyrants; and

**WHEREAS**, corporations cannot exist without employees and vice versa, a new win/win, non competitive approach/environment must be created to address the needs of both the employees and employer in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and

**WHEREAS**, since no task force has yet been constituted, this is an updated resolution to the resolution which was adopted at the 2008 Democratic State Convention.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) will take a leadership position and shall organize, coordinate, convene and conduct a task force open to MDP membership within the next calendar year for the purpose of (1) producing, publishing and distributing a document titled “Michigan Employees’ Bill Of Rights” and (2) a set of specific legislation which will be provided to the Governor and legislative leadership by December 31, 2009 or earlier for submission to the legislative process to codify and “Employees’ Bill Of Rights” within the State of Michigan; thus, establishing Michigan as a leadership state that addresses the needs of both business and employees in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Chair of the MDP shall report twice to the State Central Committee during 2009 on the status of the task force.

#### **Resolution To Form A Committee To Address Proposal A**

**WHEREAS**, on March 15, 1994, Michigan voters approved the State Constitutional amendment known as “Proposal A”; and

**WHEREAS**, Proposal A was designed to limit the growth in property taxes by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) until ownership in the property was transferred; and

**WHEREAS**, attempts have been made to change some portions of Proposal A on a piecemeal basis; and

**WHEREAS**, because Proposal A has a major impact on funding of local schools and other governmental units, Proposal A should be thoroughly addressed and examined after 15 years.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that it is recommended that the Michigan Democratic Party convene a Blue Ribbon Committee to examine all aspects of Proposal A, and make recommendations to the Michigan Democratic Party, to the Elected Officials of the State of Michigan, and to the electorate of the State

of Michigan.

**Resolution Supporting Rebuilding The State's And The Nation's Manufacturing Economy**

**WHEREAS**, the American manufacturing base has deteriorated over the last 20 years resulting in loss of reliable middle-income jobs and a widening disparity in household incomes; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Michigan's infrastructure be rebuilt and upgraded through restoration of the state's schools, roads, railways and power grid; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Michigan support and emphasize the manufacture of alternative-energy equipment and materials; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Michigan strive to become a global leader in renewable energy manufacturing and technology through support for higher education and renewable-energy manufacturing and research; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that trade agreements such as CAFTA and NAFTA be renegotiated with respect to environmental, human rights, and fair-trade issues; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that tax policy be revised regarding corporations who move their headquarters overseas in order to avoid paying U.S. taxes; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that regulatory oversight of the home mortgage and financial industries be enforced and if necessary increased; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the "Bush tax cuts" be allowed to expire and the revenue gained be directed towards economically productive investments.

**Resolution Declaring College Affordability A Critical Component Of Economic Health And Social Equality**

**WHEREAS**, the Democratic Party has always led the way when it comes to strengthening our economy and promoting opportunity for all; and

**WHEREAS**, a college degree is no longer seen as an option, but rather as an essential part of a person's success in the global economy; and

**WHEREAS**, a large, highly skilled workforce is essential to the economic health of our state and nation; and

**WHEREAS**, our state and national economies are arguably experiencing the most severe challenges since the Great Depression; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, tuition and fees at American colleges and universities rose 439 percent from 1982 through 2007, while median family income increased by only 147 percent during the same time period; and

**WHEREAS**, even after accounting for financial aid, low- and middle-income families are forced to pay a far greater share of family income for college expenses than more affluent families. Thus, the cost of college is an obstacle to the achievement of our Party's vision of equal opportunity for all; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the College Board, the average college student graduates with roughly \$20,000 of debt; and

**WHEREAS**, it is estimated that 200,000 young people per year opt not to go to college due to cost. This not only hurts that person's ability to succeed, it also impairs our nation's efforts to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century global economy while further exacerbating the economic inequalities that persist to this day.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party recognizes college affordability as a critical component of both overall economic health and social equality for all; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party calls upon President Obama, Governor Granholm, and all other Democratic elected officials to place college affordability as a top priority when it comes to ensuring equal opportunity and a healthy economy for Michigan and the United States.

### **Resolution Supporting Public Education**

**WHEREAS**, a quality public education system is necessary for a strong democracy and a strong economy; and

**WHEREAS**, a pluralistic society requires an understanding of many cultures and communities.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the state and federal governments enact legislation to make post-secondary education and vocational training affordable to all; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that "No Child left Behind" be replaced with a plan to provide adequate funding and training for communities, teachers, and students; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that public education curricula require cross-cultural education and foreign-language training.

### **Resolution Regarding Underfunded Public Schools**

**WHEREAS**, Michigan schools need to provide a state-of-the-art curriculum to prepare our children for a globalized future, and develop thinkers and problem solvers to create new and improved industry for Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, funding for Michigan schools is failing to keep up with rising costs, resulting in larger classes; cuts in technology, art, music, and physical education programs; a lack of in-service and training for teachers, and a shortage of school materials, despite sacrifices of teachers who pay for many school supplies out of their own pockets; and

**WHEREAS**, funding for special education remains inadequate, resulting in fewer special education teachers and demands for teachers to accept special education students in regular classrooms without aides, materials, or training while teaching 30 other children; and

**WHEREAS**, the number of at-risk students who struggle academically but do not qualify for special education services is increasing, even as services such as guidance counselors, social workers, supplemental reading teachers, teacher aides, and after-school tutoring programs are cut, resulting in these students being more likely to fall farther and farther behind each year and eventually be more likely to quit school, become unemployed, and/or incarcerated; and

**WHEREAS**, rising class sizes, placing as many as 32 to 35 students in a small classroom, does not allow for any individual help, differentiated instruction, learning groups, hands on learning, or advanced learning without the time, materials, etc. to be able to reach underachievers which forces teachers to teach to the middle, leaving out the at-risk students and the higher functioning students; and

**WHEREAS**, curriculum updates must be deferred until money is available and new technology funding is so scarce that teachers must write grants and compete with thousands of other teachers for the little money that is available; and

**WHEREAS**, building maintenance often suffers when costs must be cut, resulting in cold classrooms in the winter, no soap or toilet tissue in restrooms, doors missing from restroom stalls, dirty drinking fountains, dusty classrooms which causes upper respiratory problems for students and staff, playgrounds with litter and broken equipment that is dangerous for students; and

**WHEREAS**, such conditions, coupled with public demands that their health care and other benefits be cut, are demoralizing to teachers, causing many to leave the profession; and

**WHEREAS**, these problems are devastating Michigan public schools and getting worse.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports additional, sustainable, and dependable funding for Michigan public schools.

### **Resolution On Strengthening Michigan Through Strong Public Transit**

**WHEREAS**, national studies such as “Public Transportation and the Nation’s Economy,” by Cambridge Systematics Inc. (1999) show that every dollar invested in improved public transit generates between \$4 - \$9 in local economic activity; and

**WHEREAS**, national studies by the U.S. Department of Transportation show that every \$1 billion spent on transit creates and maintains over 47,000 permanent jobs; and

**WHEREAS**, air service to small communities around Michigan has been completely eliminated or severely reduced and made cost prohibitive; and

**WHEREAS**, population demographics indicate an increasing proportion of seniors, who face mobility difficulties; and

**WHEREAS**, studies show that in our urban centers, one-third of households do not have private transportation, placing an economic hardship on the demobilized; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan is eligible for hundreds of millions of dollars in federal monies for transit and has passed legislation to enable regions in the state to take advantage of this funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the Detroit metropolitan area is the largest urban area in population size without a regional public transit system; and

**WHEREAS**, global climate change is now recognized by over 300 mayors signing the U.S. Mayors Climate Change Protection Agreement, calling for cities, states, and the federal government to take actions to reduce emissions contributing to global warming; and

**WHEREAS**, America’s dependence on foreign oil is a daunting national security issue and spiraling oil costs have crippled the American economy and threatened the economic stability of American families.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Michigan must invest in public transit to continue to be a world leader in transportation and attract the companies that will create the next economy; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party urges Governor Granholm and the

Michigan Legislature to continue to support and promote new public transit investments within and between our cities, such as the Ann Arbor – Detroit regional commuter rail line and the proposed Woodward Avenue rail projects.

### **Resolution Supporting Mass Transit**

**WHEREAS**, our dependency on foreign oil is a threat to our nation's security and economy; and

**WHEREAS**, a sustainable mass-transit system needs to be developed and its use made economically competitive and practical.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that a graduated increase in the national gas tax be implemented in order to generate resources to be used for the development of mass-transit systems such as bus systems, high-speed and light rail, electric cars, plug-in hybrids and other innovations that improve the sustainability of the transportation system and reduce its carbon output.

### **Resolution Calling For Creation Of A National Mass Transit Program**

**WHEREAS**, the American automotive industry already possesses the technology, factory capacity, and skilled work force to begin manufacturing the vehicles needed for mass transit subways and metro transportation networks; and

**WHEREAS**, the creation of a national mass transit program will facilitate America's return to a productive state in the short run, and help assure the long-term growth of our economy in the long run; and

**WHEREAS**, the creation of a national mass transit program by our domestic auto industry will help assure not only the survival, but the long-term growth of our domestic transportation industry, because this nation is doubtlessly capable, given visionary national leadership, of meeting both the public and private transportation needs of our nation in the 21st Century; and

**WHEREAS**, creation of this industry on a long-term basis will stimulate the general economy through creation of well-paying, permanent jobs here at home, and allow this national investment to be paid for, by increasing the tax base of well-paid American workers; and

**WHEREAS**, creation of this industry will decrease the demand for foreign oil and help us reach our goal of greater energy independence, making it less likely that we will become entangled in the affairs of oil-rich nations who do not have our interests at heart; and

**WHEREAS**, creation of this industry must be done in conjunction with increased production of alternative fuels for transportation, as well as for homes and businesses throughout the land, including solar, nuclear, wind, and many others; and

**WHEREAS**, creation of this industry will decrease the number of individual vehicles on the road, and thereby decrease the environmental damage caused by the use of fossil fuels.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party urge the new Administration, and the new Congress, to create a national mass transit program that utilizes the expertise and capabilities of the American automotive industry, putting Americans back to work while decreasing our dependence on foreign oil and decreasing the ill effects on the environment.

## **Resolution Supporting The Development And Regulation Of Wind Turbines And Energy Grids**

**WHEREAS**, Michigan is blessed with Great Lakes, open land and wind.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that this virgin energy industry be promoted, fostered and regulated at the local level in accordance with state standards. Individual, corporate and co-op energy providers should have equal access to the information, funding and markets for energy output, thus contributing to our national energy independence initiative.

### **Supporting Development Of A Zero Waste Recycling System**

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan has had a bottle deposit recycling law with legal deposit requirements for soft drinks since 1976; and

**WHEREAS**, this law has not been updated to include new beverage containers such as water bottles, fruit drink bottles and other individual drink containers for beverages from coffee to milk and other carbonated nonalcoholic and alcoholic beverages; and

**WHEREAS**, our national economy is in a deep recession and people are losing their jobs by the thousands every day; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan leads the nation in unemployed workers; and

**WHEREAS**, there are waste landfills and incinerator operations throughout the state on a local, county and community level; and

**WHEREAS**, the impact of developing a *Zero Waste* recycling system in our state could immediately create new businesses and jobs while preserving existing positions at solid waste plants; and

**WHEREAS**, a nationwide *Zero Waste* program would save energy and other resources, and materials that would normally end up in landfills would be turned into beneficial products; and

**WHEREAS**, job creation would be much greater with a *Zero Waste* system than in the existing waste management structure, where landfill or incineration offers five to ten times fewer jobs than a system that also sorts and processes recyclable materials; and

**WHEREAS**, when actual remanufacturing of paper and plastics is added, the job creation figure jumps to sixty times; and

**WHEREAS**, building “re-use” into the job creation equation, new re-use industries would sustain more jobs in contrast to disposal operations (e.g., pallet repair operations sustaining 14 times more jobs, textiles 37 times more, multi-material facilities 38 times more, electronics re-use 68 times more jobs); and

**WHEREAS**, re-use operations tend to be locally-owned and will therefore generate more tax revenues for a community; and

**WHEREAS**, recycling jobs pay more than the average wage in most industries; and

**WHEREAS**, other states like Massachusetts and California have set deadlines for establishing *Zero Waste*; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Congress has passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan that includes funding for infrastructure and economic development.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party endorses the establishment of a task force by the State of Michigan to establish a Zero Waste project and timetable for implementation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the State of Michigan's Governor request that the U.S. President and Congress develop a Zero Waste timetable as part of Vice President Joe Biden's Middle Class Task Force focus on Green Jobs during the February 27, 2009 meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

#### **Resolution Supporting Reducing Out Of State Trash**

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan has the lowest "tipping fee" in the United States for imported waste; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan landfills are quickly being filled by out of state and foreign waste.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports legislation in Michigan that will increase the "tipping fee" to \$7.50 per ton.

#### **Resolution Supporting The Creation Of Green Jobs In Michigan**

**WHEREAS**, America's reliance on foreign fossil fuel is a daunting national security issue and a threat to our environment that requires innovative, forward-thinking solutions, including the development of alternative energy resources; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan is uniquely positioned to be a major player in the alternative energy industry because of its strong wind maps; proximity to the Great Lakes and potential water-powered energy sources; abundance of woods, the waste product of which can be converted into cellulose ethanol; manufacturing workforce and long history as a global automotive industry research and development hub; and

**WHEREAS**, in the last four years, more than 11,000 new jobs have been created in the renewable energy industry. President Barack Obama has also vowed to expand America's investment in the renewable energy economy; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Granholm has announced the creation of the Michigan Energy Corps, a strategy to put thousands of unemployed Michigan citizens back to work weatherizing more than 100,000 homes, and installing renewable energy technologies in more than 1,000 schools and public buildings; and

**WHEREAS**, alternative energy companies are looking to expand in states that have aggressive renewable energy usage goals. Governor Granholm has asked the State Legislature to enact a energy usage goal of reducing our use of imported fossil fuels to generate electricity by 45 percent by the year 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Granholm has proposed policy that would make Michigan the first state to allow utility customers to become entrepreneurs by installing solar panels or wind systems on their homes and selling the energy back to the power company; and

**WHEREAS**, adoption of a bold energy policy could radically transform Michigan's economy, providing tens of thousands of jobs for Michigan workers.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party strongly urges the Michigan Legislature to adopt a bold renewable energy agenda to save our environment and create new jobs in Michigan.

### **Resolution Opposing Sexual Orientation-Based Discrimination Regarding Blood Donations**

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party is committed to equal rights and the health and safety of all people, while valuing community service; and

**WHEREAS**, donating blood is widely recognized as a great way to give back to the community; and

**WHEREAS**, blood centers often experience shortages of blood, particularly during the winter and summer months. Should blood supplies be depleted, a considerable number of lives would be in jeopardy; and

**WHEREAS**, homosexual men in the United States are prohibited from donating blood if they have had contact with another male at any time since 1977, even if neither man has ever been tested positive for HIV/AIDS. Neither women nor heterosexuals are subject to any similar restriction; and

**WHEREAS**, currently all blood is tested for HIV/AIDS and other diseases after it is donated, meaning that it is unnecessary to prohibit anyone from donating blood based on their gender and sexual orientation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Food and Drug Administration has estimated that if this restriction were to be lifted, more than 112,000 more Americans would be eligible to donate blood. While not all of these 112,000 would actually give blood, blood supplies would be greatly increased if even a small proportion were to donate.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party opposes restrictions on blood donations based on a person's gender or sexual orientation; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Democratic Party urges the Obama Administration to direct the Food and Drug Administration to end this form of discrimination against homosexual men.

### **Resolution Supporting Revision Of The State Of Michigan's Felony Employment Process**

**WHEREAS**, approximately 12,500 citizens returned to Michigan communities from prison last year; and

**WHEREAS**, nearly half (48 percent) of those released from prison in Michigan return to prison within two years; and

**WHEREAS**, the lack of employment opportunities for individuals with a criminal record is a principal factor for recidivism; and

**WHEREAS**, reduced recidivism will greatly improve community safety; and

**WHEREAS**, taxpayers will save from reduced recidivism given that Michigan spends approximately \$32,000 annually per prisoner on incarceration costs; and

**WHEREAS**, returning citizens in Michigan are likely to be unemployed or underemployed; and

**WHEREAS**, people of color are arrested, convicted, and incarcerated in numbers disproportionate to their representation in the population, which also disproportionately impacts the families and communities of these individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan contracts for goods and services with hundreds of vendors who each have numerous employees; and

**WHEREAS**, the state has a responsibility to ensure that its vendors have fair policies relating to the screening

and identification of persons with criminal backgrounds; and

**WHEREAS**, the state's adoption of a policy serves as a model for private sector employers to enact similar policies; and

**WHEREAS**, several cities and counties throughout the country have adopted ordinances and policies similar to this resolution — these areas include Battle Creek and Kalamazoo, MI; Boston and Cambridge, MA; Chicago, IL; Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN; San Francisco, CA; Baltimore, MD; the County of Alameda (Oakland area, CA); the County of Multnomah (Portland area, OR); and the County of Travis (Austin area, TX); and

**WHEREAS**, several counties and cities are currently deciding on whether or not to adopt ordinances and policies similar to this resolution — these areas include the County and City of Los Angeles, CA; the County and City of Philadelphia, PA; Newark, NJ; and Oakland, CA; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2008 Michigan Democratic Party Platform sanctions the development of an Employee Bill of Rights, including employment rights for felons.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that that State of Michigan and its vendors shall not conduct a background check on applicants unless it is required by law for a given position or if the employer has made a good faith determination that the relevant position is of such sensitivity that a background check is warranted. The reason a background check is warranted shall be placed in writing prior to the position being offered. All applicants shall be advised that a background check is required for the position they are seeking; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if it has been established that a position requires a background check, the state and its vendors will not conduct that check until after the applicant is determined to be otherwise qualified for the position; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the state and its vendors will revise their employment applications to eliminate the box requiring disclosure of past criminal records on applications for public employment, as this information is sought and revealed in any necessary background investigation; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the state and its vendors shall consider any evidence presented by the applicant regarding the nature and seriousness of the crime(s) for which convicted, all circumstances relevant to the crime(s) including mitigating circumstances or social conditions surrounding the commission of the crime(s), the age of the person at the time of the crime(s), the length of time elapsed since the crime(s), and all other competent evidence of rehabilitation and present fitness; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if a background check is conducted and an applicant is found to have a criminal record that is likely to interfere with that applicant's abilities to carry out the responsibilities of the position, the state and its vendors (after thoroughly considering all of the above mitigating factors) are entitled to refuse, rescind, or revoke the offer of a position to the applicant; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if employment is refused, rescinded, or revoked, the employer must notify the applicant of the potential adverse employment action, providing the applicant with a photocopy of the background report received by the employer, informing the applicant of the specific parts from the report that concern the employer, providing an opportunity for the applicant to discuss the report with the employer including an opportunity for the applicant to present information rebutting the accuracy and/or relevance of the report, reviewing any information and documentation received from the applicant, and documenting all steps taken to comply with the policies of this resolution; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the State urge private employers to adopt fair hiring practices that encourage the successful reentry and/or rehabilitation of individuals in our society who have previously been incarcerated or convicted of criminal sanctions.

**Resolution Supporting Expansion Of The Jury Pool To Include Low-Income Citizens**

**WHEREAS**, the Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees to citizens the right to a jury of one's peers in criminal prosecutions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Seventh Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees to citizens the right to a jury trial in civil matters; and

**WHEREAS**, Article 1 Section 2 of the Michigan State Constitution of 1963 guarantees to citizens the right to a jury trial; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Center for State Courts conducted a study of the jury selection process in Michigan's most populous county, Wayne County, and concluded that poor citizens are disproportionately underrepresented in jury pools; and

**WHEREAS**, federal district courts rely on the same list of potential juries; and

**WHEREAS**, the study concluded that Michigan's current process of using only the names of citizens holding current driver's licenses or state-issued identification cards results in the under representation of low income citizens in jury pools; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan juries are also insufficiently diverse because of laws barring certain populations – such as ex-convicts – from serving on juries; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Center for State Courts recommends adding the list of names from voter registration rolls, the state income tax rolls, the state unemployment rolls and the state welfare rolls to the lists of names from the state driver license and state identification card rolls to enhance the ability of low income citizens to participate in the jury service process. The intent of this resolution is to ensure that no citizen is excluded from eligibility to serve on a jury and to ensure that ethnic diversity of representation is exercised in jury selection.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party urges Democratic state legislators to introduce and the Governor to sign legislation requiring the addition of voter registration, state tax return, welfare and unemployment rolls to the current use of the state driver's license and identification card lists to establish the list of potential jurors to serve in Michigan courts.

**Resolution To Re-Introduce/Prioritize House Bill 4859 “Reforming Jury Selection Process”**

**WHEREAS**, House Bill 4859 is supported by the Michigan Democratic Party.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party requests all Democratic members of the Legislature re-introduce and prioritize House Bill 4859 “Reforming Jury Selection Process” to the House and Senate for expedited passage to insure that this humanitarian bill does not expire again.

**Resolution Supporting Programs For Citizens With Disabilities**

**WHEREAS**, the disabled population of the State and the country is guaranteed equal rights and opportunities by the Constitution of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the aforementioned population requires equal access to all venues in the community including

but not limited to:

- Medical/dental health services
- Emotional support services
- Employment support services
- Transportation support services
- Housing support services; and

**WHEREAS**, the present state of such services does not adequately serve all citizens with disabilities at this time; and

**WHEREAS**, citizens with disabilities in the community are valuable resources for the growth, development, and sustainability of Michigan and the United States.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that Michigan create or revise and update a comprehensive, sustainable plan to assure that every disabled citizen has the opportunity to receive high quality access, support, and services throughout his/her life.

### **Resolution Supporting Full Equality For Transgender Americans**

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party has long stood by the principle of justice and equality for all people, regardless of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation; and

**WHEREAS**, gender variant and transgender individuals are among the most marginalized and vulnerable people within Michigan and across the United States, with a 2006 survey of transgender people conducted by the Transgender Law Center finding that 57 percent reported being discriminated against in employment and 60 percent earned less than \$15,300 a year, and with numerous other studies showing disproportionately elevated rates of homelessness, joblessness, suicide, and lack of access to basic health care; and

**WHEREAS**, gender variant and transgender individuals are systematically discriminated against in health care, and in employee benefits packages, when they are denied insurance coverage for medically necessary transgender transition services and surgeries; and

**WHEREAS**, numerous medical and health professional associations, including the American Medical Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Association of Social Workers, as well as labor organizations such as the American Federation of Teachers and Pride At Work, have all called for the elimination of discrimination against transgender individuals in health care and health insurance coverage; and

**WHEREAS**, transgender individuals are often denied basic civil rights, including the right to civil marriage, the right to fair, safe, and harassment-free institutional environments such as schools, shelters, treatment facilities, or juvenile justice programs, the right to appropriate identity documents consistent with their internal sex and social presentation, such as birth certificates and drivers licenses; and

**WHEREAS**, the leading medical subspecialty organization, the World Professional Association for Transgender Health, states that “changes to documentation are important aids to social functioning” and that “delay of documentation changes may have a deleterious impact on a patient’s social integration and personal safety,” and is echoed by both the National Association of Social Workers, which “supports the legal recognition of transgender individuals as members of the gender with which they identify, regardless of assigned sex at birth or subsequent surgical or other medical interventions”, and by the American Psychological Association which supports “access to identity documents consistent with their gender identity and expression and which do not involuntarily disclose their status as transgender”; and

**WHEREAS**, although the citizens of Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor have benefited from limited protections under local non-discrimination ordinances including protections covering “sexual orientation”, “gender identity” and “gender expression,” the absence of comprehensive state and federal statutory protections makes all citizens of Michigan vulnerable to discrimination in every aspect of their lives, including employment, housing, health care, and access to appropriate identity documents; and

**WHEREAS**, President Obama and Vice-President Biden have joined a growing number of Congressional leaders who have expressed their full support for an Employment Non-Discrimination Act which prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party reaffirms its support for full legal equality, including comprehensive anti-discrimination protection in housing, public accommodations, and employment for transgender individuals, as well as for all members of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community, including an Employment Non-Discrimination Act with full protections for “gender identity or expression”; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the elimination of all health coverage exclusions which exclude services either on the basis of transgender status or when related to transgender transition, and calls for coverage of all medically necessary health care services in private and public health plans, including coverage of medically necessary transgender transition services and procedures; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Washtenaw Democratic Party fully supports legislative and other efforts, at the state and national levels, which assure full civil rights for transgender individuals, including policies against bullying, as well as the elimination of barriers to obtaining birth certificates, drivers licenses and other identity documentation consistent with an individual’s affirmed gender identity or expression; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party calls on the national Democratic Party to adopt the principles of this resolution.

#### **Resolution Supporting Sales Tax Exemption For Red Cross Disaster Victims**

**WHEREAS**, American Red Cross services are provided to disaster victims free of charge, using no taxpayer money; and

**WHEREAS**, disaster victims are most often without resources to cover basic needs; and

**WHEREAS**, disaster victims served by the Red Cross are required to pay sales tax on goods and services purchased with Red Cross emergency money.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that disaster victims served by the American Red Cross should have tax exempt status for goods and services they need to purchase using Red Cross emergency money in the form of a debt card, including, but not limited to, meals, clothing, cleaning supplies and motel/hotel services.

#### **Resolution Supporting Reduction In Corrections Costs**

**WHEREAS**, the State of Michigan now spends more money on prison costs than it does on higher education; and

**WHEREAS**, it costs more to house a prisoner for a year (\$32,000/year) than it does to send a student to the University of Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has one of the highest costs per prisoner of any state; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan has an incarceration rate of nearly 500 persons per 100,000 residents, which far exceeds the average incarceration rates for the surrounding Great Lakes states.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the State of Michigan review and modify its sentencing policies; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that Michigan enact a thorough reform our criminal justice system to further reduce the Corrections budget.

### **Resolution Regarding Auto Insurance Rates In Michigan**

**WHEREAS**, every year, many Michigan drivers are forced to choose between foregoing auto insurance coverage and paying oppressive and unjustified insurance rates; and

**WHEREAS**, insurance providers have attempted to justify outrageous insurance rates by basing rates on consumers' credit scores, even though insurance companies have not presented a direct link between a consumer's credit score and his or her insurance worthiness; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been estimated that 60% of entry-level jobs in southeastern Michigan are not accessible by mass transit and 28% of those currently transitioning from welfare to work miss work because of transportation issues. Adding to this problem is the fact that the working poor in Detroit and other urban areas who do have access to a car are often unable to afford automobile insurance; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Jennifer Granholm has appointed Insurance Consumer Advocate Melvin Butch Hollowell to investigate and challenge unfair insurance rates in Michigan communities. Hollowell has issued a report offering several recommendations including:

- The elimination of credit scoring, education and occupation as criteria for insurance rates.
- Requiring insurance companies to obtain the insurance commissioner's approval before raising rates.
- Strengthening the insurance commissioner's authority to award refunds to consumers upon a finding that a company has overcharged policyholders.
- Prohibiting data mining – the insurance industry practice of selling personal information to third parties marketing partners.
- Requiring that rates be based on the objective criteria in the Insurance Code such as miles driven, type of vehicle, and driving record.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party endorses the findings of the Insurance Consumer Advocate's 2008 annual report; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party calls upon Governor Jennifer M. Granholm, Michigan Insurance Consumer Advocate Melvin Butch Hollowell, Michigan Insurance Commissioner Ken Ross and the Michigan State Legislature to devote significant and immediate attention to creating regulations and legislation designed to lower Michigan's automobile insurance rates.

### **Resolution Regarding Repeal Of Driver Responsibility Law**

**WHEREAS**, The Democratic Party has always advocated on behalf of vulnerable populations such as lower income citizens and current economic recession has only exacerbated the challenges facing lower income citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan's Driver Responsibility Law adds an additional financial burden on all drivers assessed with a moving violation and unable to pay fines promptly; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the working poor and lower income citizens (many of whom are seniors) who are disproportionately affected by these extra fees; and

**WHEREAS**, these extra fees have adversely affected tens of thousands of Michigan citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, citizens who do not pay the extra Driver Responsibility fee are faced with losing their driver's license, preventing them from legally driving to work or elsewhere; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan State Representative Bettie Cook Scott (D-13<sup>th</sup> District) has been a champion of efforts to repeal this onerous provision while still requiring drivers to pay all of the normal fees.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party condemns the Michigan Driver Responsibility Law and its double penalty on lower income citizens; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party urges the Michigan Legislature to pass and Governor Granholm to sign legislation to repeal the driver responsibility fee as soon as possible.

### **Real American Patriotism Means Loyalty To The Constitution Of The United States**

**WHEREAS**, the Constitution of the United States establishes the governing framework under which we have come to live and work together peacefully, despite our differences, while generally avoiding the fate of places like Beirut, Kabul, or Baghdad; and

**WHEREAS**, the Constitution's establishment of due process and equality before the law are bedrock principles of our Democratic Party, which is the Party of Jefferson; and

**WHEREAS**, every brave person serving in the United States armed forces swears an oath to protect and defend that same Constitution against all enemies, foreign or domestic; and

**WHEREAS**, the President of the United States and all Members of Congress are likewise sworn to defend the Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, the previous Administration of George W. Bush—in concert with a complicit, Republican-obstructed Congress—betrayed their own oaths of office and the trust of those who serve in uniform by seeking to undermine Constitutional Separation of Powers, circumvent the system of Checks and Balances, deny due process to United States citizens, and generally place the Executive above the law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Executive and Congress, by actions which jeopardize so much of what makes America great and unique in the world, remind us again of our own duty as citizens to protect the Constitution when they will not.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party recognizes that genuine American patriotism means upholding the nation's founding principles and values by consistent adherence to the provisions of the Constitution of the United States as we go about the business of self governance; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party proclaims that the rights secured under the Constitution of the United States necessarily apply to everyone lest they become no more than an empty promise to us all; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party declares it the duty of all patriotic Americans to defend the Constitution of the United States by demanding the observance of its system of Checks and Balances and Separation of Powers, and its provisions for due process and equality before the law; and by upholding the rights it secures for everyone, all of the time. No exceptions.

### **Resolution Concerning The War In Afghanistan**

**WHEREAS**, a failed state in Afghanistan is a danger to the United States and to the rest of the world; and

**WHEREAS**, the current military-focused approach has not succeeded in restoring peace to the region; and

**WHEREAS**, a new approach, based a more informed understanding of the culture and history of the region is required.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that a combination of diplomatic, humanitarian, and political power, as well as the judicious use of measured military force be brought to bear in order to restore peace and a functioning economy in Afghanistan.

### **Resolution Calling For The Congress “To Establish A National Commission On Presidential War Powers and Civil Liberties”**

**WHEREAS**, Congressman John Conyers, Jr. [MI-14] has introduced a Resolution in this Congress, H. Res. 104, to establish a national commission on presidential war powers and civil liberties which establishes the “National Commission on Presidential War Powers and Civil Liberties” to investigate, and report to the President and Congress on the broad range of policies of the Bush Administration that were undertaken under claims of unreviewable war powers, with full powers of subpoena; and

**WHEREAS**, the Congress should continue to pursue its document requests and subpoenas to make clear that no executive can forever hide its misdeeds from the public.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Congress should create a National Commission as proposed by Rep. Conyers to investigate a host of previously unreviewable activities of the Bush administration, including its detention, interrogation and surveillance programs. As Rep. Conyers said: “Only by chronicling and confronting the past in a comprehensive, bipartisan fashion can we reclaim our moral authority and establish a credible path forward to meet the complex challenges of a post-Sept. 11 world.” As Rep. Conyers notes: “There is no avoiding the responsibility we all bear for what has been done, and for what we choose to do next... The responsible way forward requires us to look back as we go”; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party commends Congressman John Conyers, Jr. for his long and highly valued service to the Nation in his steadfast defense of the Constitution of the United States and his leadership of the Judiciary Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives.

### **Resolution Supporting Eliminating Presidential Signing Statements**

**WHEREAS**, signing statements violate the separation of powers provision of the United States Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, history has shown that the expanded powers of the Executive Branch asserted by a president frequently have been further expanded by a subsequent president; and

**WHEREAS**, President George W. Bush utilized signing statements to change the meaning and intent of numerous acts of Congress.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the enactment of legislation to make all prior, current, and future signing statements null and void.

**Resolution Urging The United States To Join The International Criminal Court**

**WHEREAS**, President George W. Bush announced that the United States was no longer bound by the terms of the Geneva Conventions; and

**WHEREAS**, Vice President Cheney has commented on his strong support of the use of waterboarding; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States charged, prosecuted, and convicted individuals for the use of waterboarding as a war crime following World War II; and

**WHEREAS**, President George W. Bush opposed the United States joining the International Criminal Court and the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court; and

**WHEREAS**, the International Criminal Court has successfully charged, prosecuted, and convicted individuals for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the states that comprised the former Yugoslavia; and

**WHEREAS**, President Barack Obama and the Democratic Party are committed to the United States reestablishing itself as the leader of the free world.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports the signing and adoption of treaties and the enactment of legislation for the United States to become a member of the International Criminal Court; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports a sense of the Senate resolution reaffirming that the United States fully supports and is bound by the terms of the Geneva Conventions.

**Resolution Supporting An Equitable Opportunity For All States To Hold The Earliest Primary**

**WHEREAS**, New Hampshire and Iowa have always received preferential treatment of holding the first Presidential Caucus and Primary preventing the other 48 states from the opportunities of having the presidential candidates learn early on what are the issues and problems in those states.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party will work with the Michigan State Legislature, Michigan's U.S. Senators and Representatives, the Democratic National Committee and all necessary parties to:

- 1) establish a working national plan to rotate dates of all Presidential primary elections so that states from all geographic areas of the U.S. get an equitable chance to hold the earliest/first primary elections, breaking the hold that Iowa and New Hampshire have had on holding the first Presidential caucus and primary.
- 2) assure that this workable plan will prevent Michigan voters from being disenfranchised and penalized by the DNC as occurred in the most recent Michigan Presidential Primary Election and at the Democratic National Convention.

**Resolution Supporting Reform Of State Government**

**WHEREAS**, Governor Jennifer Granholm, Lt. Governor John Cherry, House Speaker Andy Dillon and other Democratic leaders have called for the reform of state government; and

**WHEREAS**, state government must lead by example and share the sacrifices made by Michigan's citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, reform of state government must make it more accountable, responsive and transparent;  
and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan needs a state government structure to meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;  
and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party has long advocated state government reform.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party reaffirms its longstanding support of reforming state government; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that such reforms should include a reduction in the salaries of all state elected officials, ending free lifetime health care benefits for state legislators after six years of service and reducing the number of state government departments; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that such reforms also should include reforms to the redistricting process to promote competitiveness between the two major parties statewide and within congressional and legislative districts; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that such reforms also should include election reforms such as no-reason absentee voting, early voting, voting by mail, universal voter registration at age 18, and verifiable and recountable paper trails for all voting devices; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that such reforms also should include financial disclosure by candidates and elected officials based on the federal model, stronger ethics standards requiring disclosure and avoidance of conflicts of interests, a 2-year ban on lobbying after leaving state government service, judicial conduct and disqualification standards, and disclosure of legislative financial records.

### **Resolution Supporting Clean Money And Clean Elections**

**WHEREAS**, elections in the State of Michigan are often dominated by special interest money; and

**WHEREAS**, Michigan officials compete in election races where significant contributions come from out of district and/or out of state; and

**WHEREAS**, wealthy individuals can use their personal fortune to buy their election; and

**WHEREAS**, large contributors and special interest groups have an unduly large influence over who is elected;  
and

**WHEREAS**, large contributors and special interest groups have unduly greater access to elected officials after they are elected.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party stands in support of Clean Money, Clean Elections legislation at the state and federal level; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that this legislation include the following requirements: a moderate number of small contributions by individuals in the district to qualify for public campaign financing; that public financing be a preset amount adequate to make the candidate's qualifications and positions known to the typical voter; after first meeting the qualifying amount a candidate accepting public campaign financing will be limited to the public campaign funds; and the availability of additional public financing if an opponent using private contributions rather than public financing significantly outspends the candidate using public campaign financing.

### **Resolution Supporting Early Voting**

**WHEREAS**, it is important to:

- Overcome the Election Day burden on polling place personnel
- Deter Election Day fraud
- Overcome the possible rejection of voters on Election Day
- Increase the participation of citizens in the voting process
- Permit no-excuse absentee voting which allows early voting for all.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party supports:

- 1) A process for allowing voters in the State to vote in elections at early voting polling places instead of voting in the voters' assigned precincts on Election Day;
- 2) Allowing such early voting to begin two weeks prior to Election Day;
- 3) Directing the State Bureau of Elections to collaborate with local boards of election to designate hours to hold early voting;
- 4) Requiring each local election board to designate early voting polling places in that county; and
- 5) Allowing "no-excuse" absentee voting.

### **Resolution Supporting Write-In Candidates**

**WHEREAS**, elections and voting are a precious and vital component of our democracy and contested elections should be encouraged rather than discouraged; and

**WHEREAS**, all voters are not members of a political party and do not choose to vote in primaries; and

**WHEREAS**, HB 4082 would prohibit any candidate who loses a primary from running as a write-in candidate for the same office in the general election; and

**WHEREAS**, that would limit voter choice in the general election.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party opposes HB 4082 and urges its defeat in order to preserve voter choice in elections.

### **Resolution Honoring DNC Chair Howard Dean**

**WHEREAS**, Governor Howard Dean led the Democratic Party as the Chair of the Democratic National Committee from 2005 to 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Dean enthusiastically embraced the visionary concept of the "50 State Strategy" and invested resources in every state, including Michigan; and

**WHEREAS**, the DNC under Governor Dean hired, trained and paid at least three staff members in all fifty states for nearly three years providing an unprecedented level of support to the grassroots of the Democratic Party; and

**WHEREAS**, the DNC under Governor Dean worked with state parties to create a national voter file for use in elections in every state up and down the ticket; and

**WHEREAS**, the DNC under Governor Dean's leadership developed innovative online tools to organize and

communicate with voters; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Dean, by all accounts, is the most successful Democratic Chair in decades; and

**WHEREAS**, during Governor Dean's term as Chair Democrats won the White House by electing Barack Obama; and

**WHEREAS**, during Governor Dean's term as Chair Democrats gained six governorships; and

**WHEREAS**, during Governor Dean's term as Chair Democrats gained the U.S. Senate majority by adding 14 seats; and

**WHEREAS**, during Governor Dean's term as Chair Democrats gained the majority in the U.S. House of Representatives by adding 55 seats; and

**WHEREAS**, during Governor Dean's term as Chair Democrats gained control of fifteen more legislative chambers; and

**WHEREAS**, there are now more elected Democrats in America than elected Republicans; and

**WHEREAS**, Democrats had a 3% registration advantage over Republicans in 2005 and now have a 8% advantage, or 11 million more registered Democratic voters than Republicans, increasing our majority status;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party heartily congratulates and expresses its deep appreciation to Governor Howard Dean for his extraordinary support of state parties and historic record of success during his term as the Chair of the Democratic National Committee.

**Resolution Commending The Michigan Democratic Party Blue Tiger Community Service Program**

**WHEREAS**, the Blue Tiger community service program of the Michigan Democratic Party seeks to once again make community service by Democrats an integral part of the activities of all Party organizations; and

**WHEREAS**, these programs not only help communities but they help build the Democratic Party through attracting and retaining activists; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2007-08, dozens of community service projects were performed by local Democratic Party organizations all over the State of Michigan, including food drives, road clean-ups, assisting veterans and many other helpful projects; and

**WHEREAS**, President Barack Obama has endorsed community service through the National Service Day held on January 19, 2009 and Michigan Democrats performed several hundred community service projects that day.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic Party is commended for the Blue Tiger community service program; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the MDP continue and expand the Blue Tiger program for 2009-10.

**Resolution Commending The Michigan Democratic Party County Commission And Municipal Election Program And Urging The Continuation And Expansion of the Program**

**WHEREAS**, it is important to have Democrats in leadership positions at the municipal and county government level where decisions are made that directly affect citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, assisting candidates for municipal and county level office is a part of developing a farm team of

future state and federal leaders; and

**WHEREAS**, assisting the campaigns of candidates for municipal and county level office plays an important Party building role at every level of the Democratic Party; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Democratic Party has implemented and enjoyed great success with its County and Municipal Election Program including in 2008 where the seats targeted by the County Program contributed to the net gain of 38 Democratic Countywide and County Commission seats in 31 counties around the state; and

**WHEREAS**, the program has helped train candidates and local parties in developing systematic and coordinated campaigns.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the leadership and staff of the MDP are commended for the County and Municipal Election Program; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the MDP continue and expand the County and Municipal Election Program for the 2009-10 election cycle and beyond.

**Resolution Adopting ‘Chair’ As The Official Title  
Replacing Chairman, Chairwoman And Chairperson**

**WHEREAS**, the use of the titles chairman, chairwoman and chairperson are redundant and unnecessarily descriptive; and

**WHEREAS**, the use of one term on a consistent basis would simplify and standardize its usage.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Michigan Democratic adopts the term “chair” replacing chairman, chairwoman and chairperson whenever possible in all Party Rules, literature and correspondence.