

Report of the Resolutions and Platform Committee for the 2008 North Carolina Democratic Party Convention

Resolutions Receiving a Favorable Recommendation

The following resolutions have been considered by the Resolutions and Platform Committee and are being referred to the 2008 Convention with a favorable recommendation. These resolutions are further divided into two groups. The first group is considered noncontroversial and is recommended to be adopted by consent. The second group deserves additional consideration and is moved forward with a recommendation for additional discussion by the Convention.

With a Recommendation to be Adopted by Consent

winners of judicial elections in 2006 used public financing.
(www.sourcewatch.org)

Education

1. Enact a Law Making the Superintendent of Public Instruction Chair of the State Board of Education

Districts 2, 4, 13

WHEREAS, the people of North Carolina elect statewide a Superintendent of Public Instruction to lead and direct the Department of Public Instruction;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges the North Carolina General Assembly to enact a law making the elected Superintendent of Public Instruction the Chair of the State Board of Education.

2. Reduction in University Tuition

Districts 2, 4, 13

WHEREAS, the Constitution of North Carolina clearly says that education shall “as far as practicable, be extended to the people of the State free of expense” and

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina has increased the tuition repeatedly in recent years to an unconscionable level;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by North Carolina Democratic Party that the General Assembly explore options to reduce tuition at public post secondary facilities, to include reducing tuition, freezing tuition and progressive tuition, and increasing grants.

Elections

3. Resolution for Election Public Financing

District 4

WHEREAS, expansion of public financing to all state-level elected positions needs to be implemented by the next major election year (2012).

WHEREAS, North Carolina legislation allowed for public financing for judicial races beginning in 2004. Five of six

WHEREAS, public financing:

1. Curbs the influence of wealthy donors over politicians.
 2. Allows candidates with limited resources to seek office – broadening the prospects for greater citizen participation.
 3. Allows politicians to spend more time serving their constituents and less time raising money.
- (www.thestate.com/local/story/333674.html)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party strongly encourage the North Carolina legislature to implement public financing for all candidates seeking to be elected and serve North Carolina as an elected state official.

4. Resolution to Protect Election Integrity in North Carolina

District 4

WHEREAS, the Public Confidence in Elections Act - Session Law 2005-323 – (hereinafter the “Act”) was passed unanimously in August 2005, which has become a model for improving voting integrity and given North Carolina a leadership position in the country; and

WHEREAS, the “Act” immediately worked to restore the public’s confidence in elections by weeding out weak and unreliable vendors, resulting in North Carolina being declared the country’s leader in efforts to ensure accurate elections by the non-profit Brennan Center: and

WHEREAS, the “Act” was improved in July 2006 to require that the State Board of Elections shall not select precincts to take part in hand-to-eye audits until after Election Day, thus making the audits truly random, and

WHEREAS, even though they are required to select precincts to audit after Election Day, the State Board of Elections is still selecting precincts to audit before Election Day, claiming that the language of the bill is imprecise; and

WHEREAS, some advocacy groups have recently encouraged N.C. legislators to change the “Act” and make it less strict to allow, among other things, more companies to compete for the

multimillion-dollar contract allowing the purchase of more – not fewer – expensive and error-prone DRE touch screen voting machines, and

WHEREAS, being number one does not mean being perfect – some touch screen counties reported failure rates as high as 9% for their thermal-paper trail printers which greatly exceeded the 1.5% to 2% failure rates claimed by the manufacturer, meaning it is not possible to do a 100% accurate hand-to-eye recount should it become necessary; and

WHEREAS, the integrity and confidence of the voting process and the recording of votes is essential to democracy, and such integrity and confidence has been restored and reinforced using voting methods that produce a verified paper ballot that can be audited and recounted;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party and all elected and appointed Democratic officials urge the N.C. Board of Elections to perform random election audits in precincts selected after the election as the law requires and not take shortcuts to undermine election integrity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party of North Carolina and elected and appointed Democratic officials urge the N.C. General Assembly to not make changes in the “Act” that make it easier for counties to purchase DRE touch screen machines; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party and elected and appointed Democratic officials urge passage of a federal version of our “Act” that requires all voting machines provide for a voter-marked paper ballot that is counted either by an optical scanner or by hand, to ensure the validity of the voters intent and for use in the event of a recount, and for tough mandatory random post-election audits.

5. Resolution on the Financial Corruption of Democracy

District 4

WHEREAS, candidates for public office in the United States must raise extraordinary amounts of money in order to campaign effectively; and

WHEREAS, the raising of money corrupts democracy; and

WHEREAS, the major need for the money arises from the government’s granting use of public broadcast airways to corporations for private profit, so that the corporations then sell time to political candidates;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Democratic members of Congress seek legislation to require commercial broadcast corporations to allow candidates for public office the use of public airways free of charge, either through the issuance of “advertising credits” calculated by a formula based on corporation profits from the broadcast frequency, or by

such other mechanism as established by Congress that eliminates the need to raise money for candidates to present themselves and their views to the electorate over the public airways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Democrats support reinstatement of the Fairness Doctrine to reduce control of information by private media owners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports public financing of elections and calls upon the General Assembly to enact legislation to expand public financing of elections.

6. National and North Carolina Election Campaign Reform

District 5

WHEREAS, the role of big money in politics is corrupting, especially to American consumers who must shoulder additional costs because of the “pay-to-play” system in which lobbyists and other special interests win expensive policy paybacks while consumers pay more for prescription drugs, cable television, bank charges, etc.; and

WHEREAS, the bipartisan “Fair Elections Now Act” (S.1285), authored by Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin (D-IL) and Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), would create a full voluntary system of public funding for federal congressional candidates, whereby candidates able to show a threshold level of public support by collecting \$5 qualifying contributions from a set number of voters in their state, and swearing off further private contributions, can qualify for public funding (known collectively as “Clean Elections public financing”) to run a competitive campaign; and

WHEREAS, the “Fair Elections Now Act” has earned the support of many groups beyond the reform community, including major labor groups like the AFL-CIO, civil rights groups like NAACP, and a host of other national groups such as the League of Women Voters, the National Council of Churches, and the Sierra Club; and

WHEREAS, individual states with Clean Elections public financing have experienced expenditures under these reforms in the \$2 to \$6 range per voting-age resident per year, when by contrast the \$63.8 billion spent by Congress on earmarks in fiscal year 2006 cost more than \$305 per voting-age resident; and

WHEREAS, Arizona’s voter turnout increased 22% in 2002 after passing Clean Elections reforms and Maine’s turnout hit a record high of 74% in 2004, in a year that 77% of candidates ran as Clean Elections candidates; and

WHEREAS, some 14 states currently provide direct public financing to candidates and an additional ten states provide minimal public financing to candidates and/or political parties, generally funded through taxpayer contributions to political parties through their tax returns; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina passed a public financing law for judicial candidates in 2002 that went into effect in 2004, providing full public financing for judicial candidates who raise “seed money” from at least 350 contributors of between \$10 and \$500 each;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party applauds the North Carolina legislature for establishing Clean Elections public financing for judicial candidates and urges the legislature to extend the reform to other state-wide offices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports S.1285 or other similar legislative reforms to bring all federally elected officials under a Clean Elections public financing system.

7. Include Presidential Race in Straight Party Ticket

District 2

WHEREAS, currently the straight party ballot does not include the presidential race:

WHEREAS, there have been significant under votes for president in recent elections:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that a straight party ticket include the candidate for the president of the United States.

Environment

8. Institute Statewide Public Transportation, Reduce Global Warming

District 4

WHEREAS, the price of gasoline has recently exceeded \$3.60 a gallon for regular gasoline with higher octane gases costing more; and

WHEREAS, it has been reliably predicted that the cost of gasoline could reach \$4.00 per gallon or higher before the end of the summer; and

WHEREAS, it has been shown through scientific evidence that the United States is one of the largest contributors of greenhouse gases that cause global warming; and

WHEREAS, one of the major contributors to greenhouse gases is the individual use of automobiles;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the state of North Carolina institute a statewide affordable system of public transportation.

9. Resolution to Consolidate Water Restriction Stages

District 4

WHEREAS, there is a serious drought, and water supplies are at all-time lows.

WHEREAS, the drought has proven that water conservation is not optional.

WHEREAS, the people affected by water restrictions, dependent on where they live, could be under a water restriction stage different from a nearby county. This is not consistent to the purpose of water restriction stages;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports statewide definitions of water restriction stages. Consolidate all county water restriction stages into a uniform list for the entire state. Each county, dependent upon their water crisis, can implement a defined state water restriction as needed.

10. Achieve Real Energy Efficiency, Conservation, Cogeneration, Wind and Solar Power

Districts 2, 4

WHEREAS, serious action to reduce climate change and environmental degradation requires strong leadership, and

WHEREAS, employing outdated options for meeting energy needs will divert needed funds away from more responsible choices,

WHEREAS, North Carolina's corporations already offer LED lighting products that use only half the power required by compact fluorescent lamps, without the mercury pollution of burned out fluorescent lights,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the state of NC block the construction of additional coal and nuclear plants, and strategize to achieve investment of the equivalent budget in the cleaner options of energy efficiency, conservation, cogeneration, wind and solar power.

11. Resolution in Support of Canceling Duke Energy's Proposed New Coal Plant at Cliffside

Districts 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13

WHEREAS, Duke Energy has proposed and been approved for a new, much larger coal-fired plant at Cliffside, 60 miles west of Charlotte; and

WHEREAS, said facility will discharge 6 million tons of uncontrolled carbon dioxide each year — more than 12 times more than the small units to be retired — along with 10 times more mercury, and 13- to 50-fold increases of toxic metals such as arsenic and cadmium; and

WHEREAS, the new Cliffside plant would double the amount of water presently evaporated from the Broad River to 21 million gallons a day – more than that used by the City of Durham; and

WHEREAS, every statewide environmental organization in North Carolina that works on energy or climate change issues opposes the plant; and

WHEREAS, Duke Energy’s CEO Jim Rogers has stated that: “As the third-largest coal consumer in the United States, and one of the largest greenhouse-gas emitters, Duke Energy has a responsibility to be part of the solution”; and
WHEREAS, there is no such thing as “clean coal”; and

WHEREAS, Dr. James Hansen, the head of NASA’s Goddard Institute of Space Studies and the nation’s foremost climate change expert, has stated that “stopping this new coal plant is the best thing North Carolina can do to slow global warming;” and

WHEREAS, energy experts have repeatedly brought before the N.C. Utilities Commission and legislative bodies data that demonstrate that the new generation capacity from this plant is not necessary and that proven methods of energy conservation, cogeneration, and wind and solar power can meet projected energy demand for the plant;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party strongly supports cancellation of the Cliffside coal power plant and urges the state and local Democratic parties, upon passage of this resolution, to notify Duke Energy’s CEO Jim Rogers of their views and to strongly urge Governor Easley, legislative leaders and North Carolina Democratic candidates for office to take a public stand in support of this resolution.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party insists on our government leaders emphasizing real, meaningful, and substantial renewable energy choices, such as wind, water, and solar power.

12. Resolution Concerning Eco-Friendly Construction

District 2, 4, 13

RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urge state and local governments in North Carolina to adopt sustainable building codes (e.g., green roofs) and encourage eco-friendly materials and practices in construction of new buildings according to such codes, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that state and local governments encourage retrofitting existing structures with sustainable and eco-friendly materials and practices.

13. Sidewalks, Crosswalks, and Bike Lanes

District 5

WHEREAS, walking and biking are good exercise for both the health of citizens and the environment;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that city, county, and state governments in North Carolina should investigate, prioritize, and enact policies that encourage biking and walking.

14. Global Warming and Natural Resources

District 5

WHEREAS, our environment is at risk and immediate action is required
Coal-fired plants and concrete production plants are emitting extremely high levels of mercury, a dangerous neurotoxin,

WHEREAS, wolves and buffalo are being slaughtered with our government’s blessing,

WHEREAS, polar bears are losing their habitat and may be extinct within 50 years while our government has quietly allowed oil drilling in one of the Polar Bears’ habitats,

WHEREAS, clean water and air for future generations has not been a priority of this administration,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that reversing the damage to our atmosphere and environment must be among the top three imperative initiatives for the future of generations to come.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that local governments and states will be encouraged to participate in these initiatives.

15. Resolution to allow the appropriate use of grey water

District 13

WHEREAS, the Southeast region of the United States is in a severe water crisis, and

WHEREAS, at present, grey water is treated as waste and flushed down the sewers or septic systems, and

WHEREAS, there are many ways grey water can be used safely and effectively,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the North Carolina Democratic Party hereby requests that the state government amend appropriate building and health codes to allow the appropriate use of grey water.

16. Resolution Supporting the Creation of an Independent (Non-Utility) Statewide Energy Efficiency Program

District 13

WHEREAS, energy costs for residents, business and industry are rising, and don’t reflect all of the externalized health and environmental costs of centralized power plants or fossil fuel combustion by vehicles;

WHEREAS, the only truly clean energy is energy that is not used;

WHEREAS, the cost of implementing energy efficiency and conservation measures is much lower than the cost of current

centralized power production, lower than renewable sources and still lower as compared to centralized sources being constructed or planned;

WHEREAS, low income residents of NC are disproportionately impacted by living in older and less efficient homes, and paying a higher percentage of income for energy costs;

WHEREAS, installation of energy conservation and efficiency improvements would generate thousands of new jobs in North Carolina;

WHEREAS, energy efficiency and other “demand-side” programs implemented by for-profit utilities face a built-in conflict with the purpose of those power utilities to sell power, and the utilities have requested plans to profit excessively (up to 200%) from such programs;

WHEREAS, six other states (ME, VT, OR, NY, NJ and WI) have demonstrated the implementation of independent efficiency programs that have saved millions of dollars in energy costs for ratepayers and natural gas customers, while reducing greenhouse gas and toxic emissions by millions of pounds;

WHEREAS, bio-fuels development for transportation is already contributing to increased food prices and will do so even more severely in the future, in addition to causing deforestation, increased water use and pollution for biofuel crop production, while delaying transportation and vehicle efficiency policies that will bring true cost-effective and sustainable reductions in greenhouse gases and other emissions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

1. That the State of North Carolina should establish and provide startup funding for an independent energy efficiency program that would provide education, incentives, job training and affordable financing for measures to improve energy performance in homes, businesses and industry, with a goal of leveling energy demand by 2010, and reducing it by 50% by 2020, allowing substantial displacement of current centralized energy production (coal and nuclear plants) by decentralized, renewable, clean and sustainable sources of energy, excluding bio-fuels,

2. That the State of North Carolina should discontinue funding the development of biofuels to prevent damage to food security and the environment, and instead commit to sustainable transportation policies to reduce vehicle trip frequency and mileage, and require a 50% increase in average vehicle fuel efficiency by 2012.

17. Resolution Calling For Legislation to Protect North Carolina Well Users and Our Groundwater as a Safe Future Resource

District 13

WHEREAS, over 2.7 million North Carolina residents depend on private wells for their daily water supply;

WHEREAS, private wells installed before July 1, 2008 have no state requirements for inspection or testing for biological or chemical contamination;

WHEREAS, there is no state law requiring that well users be notified of nearby groundwater contamination, and no comprehensive statewide database with information about groundwater contamination that would allow the public or health departments to determine that their well water may be at risk from spreading contamination;

WHEREAS, there are a number of underfunded and staffed environmental regulatory programs in North Carolina, as well as inadequately monitored contaminated sites, and extremely limited funding for testing wells or assisting low and modest income residents with replacement safe water;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports legislation to require bilingual door to door notification of well users of any contaminated site within 1500 feet of their well and assistance with testing for suspected contaminants, creation of a comprehensive statewide database of all contaminated groundwater sites, staff positions as needed to carry out these functions, and an increase in funding for the Bernard Allen Memorial Emergency Drinking Water Fund to at least \$2M per year for at least five years, for cost effective safe replacement water of up to \$10,000 per household, for well repair, drilling new wells, hookups to public water lines, and filtration systems for residents who are not close to water lines, with a priority on spending for residents with household incomes less than 3 times the federal poverty level.

18. Resolution on Ecology

District 11

WHEREAS, Local food systems provide a local source of food, reducing the community’s dependence on imported food which is subject to increasing fuel costs of transportation and to disruption due to economic and natural disasters affecting food production and supply elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, Local food grown organically has proven health benefits; and farmland preserves the rural character of a community; and

WHEREAS, Our communities believe in the importance of a sustainable economy wherein workers are paid a livable wage; and local agriculture presents economic opportunities for local residents in food production, preservation, and marketing; and

WHEREAS, Preservation of the natural balance of the environment is essential to human well-being; and eco-friendly construction and land development practices preserve precious water resources and trees and vegetation; and

WHEREAS, Trees are some of the most important resources for the preservation of the natural balance;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the principle that every community should strive to create a sustainable agricultural and economic base within a reasonable circumference of its city center and should encourage eco-friendly development and husband its natural resources and use them wisely, understanding especially that trees create and sustain water resources.

19. Resolution on Energy Independence and Global Warming

District 11

WHEREAS, the United States relies for 40% of its energy supplies on petroleum products, and oil prices continue to rise due to both increased demand and decreased supplies, and

WHEREAS, fossil fuel burning is the major cause of Global Warming, the occurrence of which is now beyond doubt, and

WHEREAS, both national security and the national and global economy are put at risk of severe disruptions due to the above problems,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the establishment of a comprehensive national effort to free this nation of its dependence on foreign energy sources through the development of alternative energy resources to avoid the consequences of Global Warming.

20. Resolution Requiring a Statewide Independent County Health and Environmental Authority

District 11

WHEREAS, we daily witness the deterioration of our environment which causes epidemic disability and chronic health problems as shown by ruinous health costs; and

WHEREAS, the use of independent and well informed precautionary decisions regarding health and environment can save our communities great human suffering from death and disease, as well as billions of dollars from environmental pollution; and

WHEREAS, local, state and federal health and environmental regulators have repeatedly admitted that they have neither the budget nor the manpower to protect our communities health and environment; and

WHEREAS, prohibition of conflicts of interest and specific background and experience is needed to comprehend and authorize the health and environmental consequences of industrial and environmental pollution; and

WHEREAS, county commissioners and health officials have a conflict of interest in admitting regulatory failures and do not take the time or have the experience to research the history of potential industrial pollution and environmental health injuries; and,

WHEREAS, counties have lost millions of dollars due to inappropriate corporate incentives, pollution related health costs, contaminated and depreciated land values, contaminated water and air; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina and the federal Environmental Protection Agency have failed miserably to protect the health and environment as is evidenced by exponential growth of cancer, neurological, immune, reproductive diseases, as well as birth defects, miscarriages, lung and heart conditions. All of which have been scientifically linked with toxic exposures; and,

WHEREAS, the need for greater protections are evidenced by the NC State Dept. of Health statements to the EPA that McDowell County has excessive lung disease and McDowell County cancer records have gone unreported since 2002, as well as numerous reports of miscarriages and birth defects in teachers at North Cove Elementary and reports of brain cancer in Old Fort; and

WHEREAS, board members should be required to have a history of proven interest in health and environment issues, as distinct from recreational or conservation environmental issues, and no economic conflicts of interest (among themselves or their family) as these individuals would best serve the citizens as a County Health and Environmental Authority.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Democrats require state legislation mandating a County Health and Environment Authority to protect the health and environment of each county by providing research, and direction on matters of Health and Environment within that county. The Health and Environment Authority shall be responsible for review of any industry or business that would seek to relocate in the county. The Authority would especially be mandated to investigate companies requiring any environmental permit or those known to affect health or environment. The Authority will research past environmental and worker histories, fines, salaries, worker injuries or deaths or other information that may indicate future corporate behavior. The Authority shall also be required to investigate any local incidence of pollution or environmental health threat and mandated to notify the affected public and appropriate authorities of environmental or health threats.

21. Environmental Health Regulation

Districts 2, 4

WHEREAS, local departments of environmental health have been overwhelmed by requests for septic systems, wastewater discharges and permits in the Triangle and coastal areas,

WHEREAS, these same departments operate with locally designed standards for septic systems and other point source water discharges,

WHEREAS, the permitting process appears to favor large developments over single family residence permitting,

WHEREAS, the standards for such permits have become less clear and more open to interpretation by the field technician than a standard set to clear measurement of soil percolation or discharge standard,

WHEREAS, the citizens in the state of North Carolina deserve equal treatment under the law and under regulations passed by the state legislature,

WHEREAS, the execution of the code/regulation/law governing such discharges may appear capricious to homeowners and owners of residential dwellings,

WHEREAS, the citizens deserve good service for their tax dollars,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that septic system and water discharge standards affecting single family residences and small landowners, under NC general statute Chapter 130, be unified under a common code for the whole state of North Carolina and its one hundred counties, in a resolution which is clear, understandable, published, and made available to residents of the state, and is discharged equally in all counties by the Department of Environmental Health.

22. Resolution of Support for 306 Acre Destination Park on the Dix Campus

District 13

WHEREAS, Dorothea Dix dedicated her life to those with mental illness and whose kindness and concern for others inspired the establishment of the first mental health hospital in North Carolina in 1850; and

WHEREAS, with the closing of Dorothea Dix Hospital at the end of 2008, there is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to protect the remaining 306 acres on the Dix campus and preserve it as a world-class destination park; and

WHEREAS, preserving the historic buildings located on the Dix campus for future public use respects the legacy of the past and promotes future opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of 306 acres as a destination park ensures the well-being of future generations, our economic stability and our quality of life; and

WHEREAS, 306 acres will not come close to being enough green space for North Carolina's quickly growing and expanding population; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina prides itself in balancing progress with preservation; making North Carolina a great place to live and work; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that once the Dorothea Dix Hospital closes, the NC Democratic Party State Executive Committee expresses support of the land use plan that preserves the 306 acres of the Dix Campus as a world-class destination park for all of NC; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports keeping the Dorothea Dix Hospital open as long as needed to serve the mental health community of NC ; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee encourage all elected officials to endorse and support this plan to preserve the 306 acres on the Dorothea Dix Campus as a world-class destination park.

Healthcare

23. Resolution on Access to Health Care

District 11

WHEREAS, more and more communities are establishing Health Care Connect Systems (nonprofit organizations) that integrate public and private health systems, make it possible for patients to security access to their medical records and track all events in their health care history; and

WHEREAS, better integration among public health systems is available now; and

WHEREAS, a HealthCare connect system that connects low-income, uninsured residents with complete, coordinated health care at affordable rates by partnering powerful private-public partnership of government, hospitals, physicians, and others in the healthcare industry working together to make a healthier community (using the Mariposa County AZ model); and

WHEREAS, grants area available to help communities develop or strengthen health care delivery; and

WHEREAS, health care costs can be reduced by minimizing ER visits, better managing patients with chronic conditions, and concentrating on prevention instead of treatment,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party organize "An Action Plan for an Organized System Plan of Integrated Medical Care"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States remove health care obstacles by establishing a health tracking record that will follow the patient and obviate the need for the patient to repeatedly fill out the same forms over and over again, having to rely on memory and not factual documents.

24. 2008 Resolution on Medical Care

District 11

WHEREAS, Medical costs in the United States are rising more rapidly than the rate of inflation, and

WHEREAS, An increasing numbers of citizens and businesses are unable to afford health care, and

WHEREAS, Those who do have medical care insurance are increasingly called upon to bear the costs of medical treatment and hospitalization for the uninsured, and

WHEREAS, Privatization of medical care and insurance has led to increasing costs of health care due to profit, claims denial expense and increased administrative expense by care providers like doctors and hospitals, and

WHEREAS, the cost of medical care in the US is far higher than the costs in other developed nations like England and Canada which have national health care systems,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the establishment of a universal, single-payer health care system, including prescription drug coverage, resembling Medicare or the health care system used by members of Congress.

25. Resolution Prohibiting Pharmaceutical Gifts

District 11

Taken in part, with permission, from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Senate Bill No. 2526.

WHEREAS, gifts given to doctors by the pharmaceutical industry for prescribing new, patent pending pharmaceuticals, encourages the prescription of newer and less proven drugs to maximize pharmaceutical companies profit, while confusing the physicians' responsibilities to their patients needs, and;

WHEREAS, patients should receive prescriptions based on what is best for them and not what is most lucrative for their physician or pharmaceutical company,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

1. No pharmaceutical manufacturer or their agents shall offer or give to a physician or a member of a physician's immediate family or a physician's employee or agent or a health care facility or employee or agent of a health care facility any gifts, travel expenses, meals, or job offers that may be interpreted as payment or encouragement for prescribing drugs.

Furthermore, no physician or a member of a physician's immediate family or a physician's employee or agent or health care facility or employee or agent of a health care facility may solicit or accept from any pharmaceutical manufacturer or their agent, gifts, travel expenses, meals, or job offers that may be interpreted as a payment or encouragement for prescribing drugs.

2. A person who violates this section shall be punished by a fine of \$5,000 or by imprisonment for 2 years, or both.

26. In Support of Development of a System of Universal Health Care

District 11

WHEREAS, adequate healthcare should be a guaranteed right for everyone, regardless of income or age; and,

WHEREAS, a present only a privileged few can afford the exorbitant cost of health insurance; and,

WHEREAS, employers are increasingly unable to provide health insurance to all employees; and,

WHEREAS, people without employment are forced to pay for their own full insurance - or have no coverage at all; and,

WHEREAS, pharmaceutical companies and their lobbyists have undue influence on healthcare regulations, expenses, and drug prices.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party provide leadership and collective power to mitigate the influence and control of the medical industry by the pharmaceutical companies and their lobbyists; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that universal health insurance be made available to every person from birth to death, even though it may mean higher taxation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a study of health systems internationally be undertaken to glean ideas that our government might borrow or adapt to our system of healthcare, such as alternative care and medicine; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that pharmaceutical companies be prohibited from spending billions of dollars on television and other unnecessary media advertising, since this only adds to the cost of medicines that the general public is then forced to pay.

Human Rights & Free Speech

27. Resolution in Support of Reproductive Rights

District 4

WHEREAS, for more than a generation a Constitutional Right to Privacy has been recognized as U. S Law, and

WHEREAS, reproductive rights, including the exercise of a woman's decision to terminate a pregnancy, have been regarded as covered by the Right to Privacy, and

WHEREAS, at both State and federal levels this Right has come under increasing Judicial and Legislative attack,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that support for the Right to Privacy be strengthened by all possible means, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that decisions regarding reproductive rights be left to the discretion of individual person; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that every public school in the United States have a comprehensive sex education program so that individuals have the support they need to make informed decisions about their reproductive rights.

28. For Protections of Civil Law for Individuals

District 4

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly and the United States Congress have over the years legislated a body of civil commercial and employment law to insure fair dealings and to protect the rights of individuals; and

WHEREAS, corporations seek to nullify the democratically enacted civil law by including arbitration clauses in contracts that are a condition of employment or of receipt of services or products; and

WHEREAS, courts have begun upholding arbitration clauses as legally pre-empting civil law;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges the Democratic members of Congress and of the General Assembly to pass laws rendering legally invalid, in a contract that is a condition of employment or sale, any clause which pre-empts, in advance, rights otherwise available to employees and consumers under civil law.

29. Resolution on Human Rights

District 2, 4 & 13

WHEREAS, the United States was created from a vision of freedom and justice; and

WHEREAS, its continued safety depends on its moral strength as well as its armed forces;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the United States respect and promote human rights at home and abroad by using appropriate diplomatic and economic policies to eliminate oppression, and by extending aid to organizations that deal with the effects of oppression such as those supporting women's health and economic status;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States uphold the Constitution and International law and outlaw such barbarisms as torture, extraordinary rendition, collective punishment, cruel and unusual punishment abroad as well as at home.

30. Resolution on Equal Rights

District 11

WHEREAS, The United States of America was founded on the principle that all human beings are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights – among them, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREAS, In our national pledge, we pledge allegiance to our country and its promise of “liberty and justice for all”; and

WHEREAS, The Democratic Party has traditionally stood for the principle of common decency, advocating civil rights and equal justice for all;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the principle that every human being is entitled to equal rights under the law, common courtesy, and respect without regard to gender, race, creed, color, national origin or sexual orientation.

31. Habeas Corpus Rights for Detainees Resolution

District 11

WHEREAS, the writ of habeas corpus that dates from the Magna Carta of 1215 entitles a prisoner to demand to be brought before a judge to prove the legality of his detention and to challenge an accusation, and

WHEREAS, the Military Commission Act of 2006 states that no court, justice, or judge shall have jurisdiction to consider a writ of habeas corpus for a non-United States citizen detained as an enemy combatant, and

WHEREAS, this law specifically pertains to those detainees held at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba and

WHEREAS, the writ of habeas corpus is a universal right. Section 9 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution mandates that “The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the Public Safety may require it.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Military Commission Act of 2006 is an unconstitutional suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and should be repealed. The prisoners of Guantanamo Bay should be given their constitutional right of habeas corpus. Appeals on their behalf to the United States Supreme Court should be upheld.

32. In Opposition to Undermining and Violating our Constitutional Rights under the Guise of National Security

District 11

WHEREAS, there is a natural tension between U. S. Constitutional guarantees of the rights of its citizens (including the right to privacy, etc.) and the right to be protected from foreign or domestic terrorism; and,

WHEREAS, the United States of America is a country of laws, not men [or women]; and,

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the United States of America establishes three, co-equal branches of government for the erecting, approving, and enforcing the nation's laws, carefully providing a balance of power among those branches; and,

WHEREAS, the present Republican Executive Branch of government has far overstepped its constitutional boundaries, taking unto itself powers that are in the neither the U.S. Constitution nor in present law; and,

WHEREAS, the present Republican administration has emphasized national security, at the expense of the right to privacy, resulting in illegal wiretapping and other illegal actions by government agents, at the direction of the Executive Branch; and,

WHEREAS, existing laws providing for legal wiretaps are both adequate and effective for the discovery and investigation of potential terrorists and terrorism.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that members of Congress, especially our North Carolina representatives, be instructed to vote against any form of a FISA bill that would grant immunity to those agencies and corporations who cooperated with U.S. security and investigatory agents and agencies in providing wire taps of U.S. citizens without proper, legal authority and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that members of Congress, especially our North Carolina representatives, be instructed to demand that U.S. Telecoms that have illegally cooperated with the Executive Branch in wiretapping without approval from the FISA court, provide to the appropriate Congressional Committees and to the Justice Department complete and thorough records of both the scope and content of all such wiretaps made without Constitutional authority; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that members of Congress, especially our North Carolina representatives, be instructed to demand that those Telecoms that illegally cooperated with the Executive Branch in wiretapping the phone calls of U.S. citizens without approval from the FISA court, be investigated by Congress, and that all information, data, and evidence of their actions, and those of the Executive Branch of government related to these actions be handed over to the Justice Department, so that recurrence of these heinous breaches of constitutional rights will be stopped.

Immigration

33. Resolution against Making Law Enforcement Responsible for Enforcing Federal Immigration Law

Districts 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Democratic Party recognizes the inherent dignity and humanity of North Carolina's immigrant residents, regardless of immigration status, and recognizes the importance of their many contributions to our State's rich and varied economic, cultural, social, political and religious life; and

WHEREAS, Congress has utterly failed in its responsibility to overhaul the broken and out-dated immigration system which is forcing state and local governments to address the myriad problems this failure engendered; and

WHEREAS, an enforcement-only approach falls far short of addressing the complex economic and social realities of immigration and therefore leaves state and local authorities ill-

equipped to deal with the challenges of a many-layered issue; and

WHEREAS, programs that transfer federal immigration responsibilities to state and local officials, with or without incentives, blur the line between civil and criminal law and may infringe on NC state laws and local ordinances as well as violate civil and human rights of immigrants and citizens alike; and

WHEREAS, these types of programs erode the relationship between immigrant communities and local authorities with the result that fewer people would report being victims of or witnesses to crimes in our communities, seek medical care for contagious diseases, alert authorities to dangerous conditions, or obtain the required training or licensure to meet basic safety standards, consequentially undermining the efforts of local law enforcement and posing a threat to public health and public safety; and

WHEREAS, these types of programs also result in increased racial profiling and civil rights violations by state and local authorities, causing distrust and resentment to thrive in our communities instead of cooperation and goodwill; and

WHEREAS, these types of programs take much-needed resources away from state and local governments, leaving North Carolina's communities less safe and less able to address critical issues effectively; and

WHEREAS, enforcement policies that differ greatly from county to county, from community to community, from agency to agency, from institution to institution, will result in unequal protection under our laws, promote divisiveness and discord, and may encourage over zealousness and even vigilante violence, all of which will weaken North Carolina's unity and stability;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party opposes any efforts to make state and local authorities responsible for the enforcement of federal immigration laws and asks Congress to make comprehensive immigration reform a top priority again. The intent of this resolution is not to prohibit the reporting of undocumented immigrants to federal authorities after they are convicted of a felony.

34. Support Higher Education for Immigrant Students

Districts 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Democratic Party's platform affirms our commitment to "Full and equal protection of the lives, liberties, rights, and properties of all citizens and residents of North Carolina and to striving for educational excellence for all persons - regardless of their race, age, gender, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status, developmental disability, primary language, location, or station in life"; and

WHEREAS, the failure of Congress to pass meaningful immigration reform has left tens of thousands of undocumented North Carolina school children in legal limbo without the possibility to further their education beyond high school and, therefore, significantly reducing their opportunities to contribute to the fullness of their potential to the communities they call home; and

WHEREAS, immigrant students who came here as young children were educated in our school system; were steeped in our culture and values and consider themselves Americans; will most likely never return to their countries of origin, either voluntarily or involuntarily; and will be an important part of North Carolina's communities and workforce for decades to come; and

WHEREAS, for North Carolina to remain competitive in a globalized economy it must nurture a knowledge-based workforce that has access to the education and training necessary to adapt to a constantly changing world economy; and

WHEREAS, the NC Community's College System's recent decision to reverse its Admission Policy for undocumented immigrants--a fair and sound policy championed eloquently by its immediate past president Dr. Martin Lancaster--is based on a flawed interpretation of federal law and is neither necessary nor just;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the North Carolina Democratic Party hereby urges the NC Community College System to reinstate its 2007 Admission Policy for undocumented immigrants that gives deserving young immigrant students the same opportunities to go to college as their American classmates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the NC Community College System and the University of NC System as well as North Carolina legislators to make in-state tuition available to immigrant students who have graduated from our high schools and fulfill North Carolina residence requirements since they are clearly an asset to our communities.

35. Resolution Calling for Comprehensive Immigration Reform

District 4

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Democratic Party recognizes the inherent dignity and humanity of North Carolina's immigrant residents, regardless of immigration status, and recognizes the importance of their many contributions to our State's rich and varied economic, cultural, social, political and religious life; and

WHEREAS, Congress has utterly failed in its responsibility to overhaul the broken and out-dated immigration system which is forcing state and local governments to address the myriad problems that this failure engendered;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges the U. S. Congress to make comprehensive immigration reform a top priority.

Iraq/Military

36. Abolish Mercenary Forces

Districts 2, 4

WHEREAS, the rise of the "American" mercenary forces as funded by Congress and authorized by the Bush administration is a clear and present danger to the American republic; and

WHEREAS, Congress must have the political will to use their clearly defined power of the purse over the purchase of the services of mercenary troops in Iraq, and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, the President has absolutely no constitutional authority to raise and fund private armies. Yet, tens of thousands of mercenary soldiers are deployed in Iraq and elsewhere, and are funded by the United States; and

WHEREAS, some of these private troops, under the aegis of FEMA, and the excuse of a natural disaster, have been deployed inside the United States, and conferred with the powers of local police - a complete violation of the long-standing constitutional tradition that the police power is a right and responsibility of the states and their designated local governments; and

WHEREAS, some of the mercenaries are not American citizens or residents, and that the owner/operators of many of the firms engaged in this business are dedicated ideologues who have re-cycled their profits into the American political process; and

WHEREAS, historically, mercenary troops have clearly been a consistent threat to democratic governments, and that such troops have ever been the support of authoritarian regimes. That their use by authoritarian kings were essential issues of the English Revolution of the 17th century and the American Revolution of the 18th; That mercenary troops played large and essential roles in the destruction of republican governments and the subsequent rise of fascism in 20th century Europe., and that the professionalization and privatization of the Roman army were essential elements in the decline and fall of the Roman Republic;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges:

1. That Congress immediately and completely de-fund the use of mercenaries by the United States government.
2. That the President disband these mercenary forces.
3. That Congress make the deployment of such forces inside the United States illegal.
4. That the Congress make the raising, equipping and training of mercenaries illegal.

37. Resolution to Withhold Further Funding of the War in Iraq

District 4

WHEREAS, the United States has been the principal occupying power in Iraq for five years;

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush has issued more than 700 “signing statements” declaring his intention not to comply with, nor enforce, numerous portions of legislation duly enacted by the U.S. Congress;

WHEREAS, Mr. Bush has by this means declared, among other things, his right and his intended refusal to comply with any legislation that would (1) prevent the permanent establishment of permanent military installations in Iraq or (2) prevent the United States from “exercising control of the oil resources of Iraq;”

WHEREAS, Republican candidate John McCain has publicly stated that he would find it acceptable for the US military to remain in Iraq for “maybe 100 years;”

WHEREAS, it is widely accepted that the mid-term elections of 2006 represented the will of a large majority of the American people to discontinue the occupation of Iraq at the earliest feasible time;

WHEREAS, the above considerations indicate that Congress will be able to effectively represent the expressed will of the American people only by withholding funds for the unnecessary continued occupation of Iraq;

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party, with deep gratitude and unalterable support for the dedication and bravery of our service men and women and their families, and recognizing the extreme stress that is being daily placed on them, and on our military institutions, by the continued occupation of Iraq; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party requests that our Congressional delegation seek to include, in any appropriations bill or “supplemental” introduced in the Congress to take effect after 31 July 2008 and intended to fund the continued occupation of Iraq, provisions that will upon the effective date of such legislation:

1. Prohibit the expenditure of any funds to support, directly or indirectly, any further combat activities in or over Iraq by U.S. military forces, or by contractors or any other agent of the United States;
2. Expressly provide that the above prohibition of expenditures shall not apply to limited military actions undertaken purely to protect our troops, related personnel and equipment during their extraction from occupied areas or thereafter; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges its representatives in the North Carolina General Assembly to seek passage of a resolution by

the Legislature instructing the North Carolina delegation to the U.S. Congress to support the above action.

38. Resolution Regarding the Military Recruitment of Minors

District 4

WHEREAS, minors under eighteen cannot enlist in the military without parental permission, and as a society we deny other rights to minors such as voting, signing contracts, purchasing alcohol and cigarettes, or making certain medical or legal decisions, and

WHEREAS, sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds are routinely urged by military recruiters to commit themselves to future enlistment after their eighteenth birthday, and these ages are too young for many individuals to comprehend and evaluate fully the consequences of their decisions, and

WHEREAS, military recruiters have both the incentive and resources to promote military service by stressing its positive aspects and down-playing its costs, and

WHEREAS, federal legislation, particularly the No Child Left Behind Act, mandates that “every local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to post secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party hereby expresses its disapproval of attempts by military recruiters to urge or extract any form of commitment for military service prior to an individual’s eighteenth birthday and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Party calls upon North Carolina’s elected representatives in Congress to amend the No Child Left Behind Act to prohibit the recruitment or solicitation of commitments for military service from minors, whether this be on school property or outside of school property, unless the minor initiates without prompting, inquiries or commitments for military service.

39. Resolution Opposing the Present War Policy

Districts 2, 4, 13

WHEREAS, the United States alone spends 48% of the entire world’s expenditures on the military; and

WHEREAS, the United States owns or rents between 700 and 800 military bases worldwide, in about 130 foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, the United States military has not accomplished the claimed strategic nor political objectives in Afghanistan and Iraq, a shortfall which demonstrates that a massive military is not a successful approach for pursuing U.S. Interests abroad; and

WHEREAS, pursuit of these militaristic adventures has been used to justify abrogating the human rights guaranteed under the Constitution, as the Republican administration has denied habeas corpus and the right to a fair trial without coerced self-incrimination, has carried out domestic warrantless spying, has refused to accede to Congressional oversight, and has carried out practices on prisoners which are criminal under international law; and

WHEREAS, the extraordinary expenditures, the abridgment of freedom, and the forfeiture of moral leadership constitute the most real and present danger to the American Republic;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party and its elected officials turn away from militarism as the primary instrument of foreign policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party strengthen the Republic by promoting the common welfare of its people in education, health care, adequate retirement and economic security, adequate public infrastructure, and adherence to human rights and freedoms.

40. A Resolution for New GI Bill of Rights

Districts 2, 4, 13

WHEREAS, the original GI Bill of Rights (the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944) was one of the most important pieces of legislation ever created in this country; and

WHEREAS, the original GI Bill of Rights provided millions of World War II veterans with free college education, home-loan assistance, and unemployment benefits, which greatly increased the enrollment in universities and home ownership rates and helped create a large post-war economic expansion; and

WHEREAS, the current Montgomery GI Bill created in 1984 does not adequately meet the needs of our current veterans who are honorably serving our nation in combat overseas; and

WHEREAS, the rising cost of higher education has made college unaffordable to many veterans, with the average cost for public college tuition plus room and board at \$17,400 annually and yet the current GI Bill only provides an average of \$5,800 and a maximum of \$9,300; and

WHEREAS, the current Montgomery GI Bill places multiple restrictions and hardships on veterans including transferability of benefits, reduced benefits for National Guard and Reserves, reduction of pay at sign up;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls for the United States Congress to pass a new GI Bill of Rights and provide all combat veterans, including active duty, National Guard and Reserve, with full tuition plus room and board to any four-year public university; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any new GI Bill of Rights contains additional educational, unemployment, and

home-loan assistance benefits for all veterans, both combat and non-combat, who have served honorably since 9/11; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that any new GI Bill of Rights benefits be tied to inflation so that future veterans will receive the same benefits and allow these benefits to be transferred to spouses or children.

41. Healthcare for Members of the Armed Forces

District 5

WHEREAS, many military service personnel who return from Iraq and Afghanistan require treatment for physical and/or mental damage; and

WHEREAS, the Bush administration has repeatedly proposed budget cuts to the Veterans Administration, particularly to health-care benefits; and

WHEREAS, volunteer groups and non-profit agencies have attempted to render aid and comfort in the veteran health-care crisis, sometimes at great personal and financial sacrifice and without support from government; and

WHEREAS, both NC senators Elizabeth Dole and Richard Burr and 5th Dist. Congresswoman Virginia Foxx have voted repeatedly to rubberstamp the Bush budget cuts for veterans health-care, even while giving lip-service to "supporting the troops";

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party rejects the political hypocrisy of announcing "support for our troops" while simultaneously voting for budget cuts that penalize veterans and calls on our national government to address needs and promote healing through education, medical aid, and social community, and to provide financial support to those ends including support for those individuals and non-profits that are currently attempting to provide for those needs.

42. Resolution in Support of Our Troops and on the Use of the Nation's Military Power

District 13

WHEREAS, we honor the integrity and commitment of each Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine, Coast Guardsman, National Guard or Reservist.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED that whatever our Nation's future decision about use of its military power, each service member and their families are fully assured that the dangers and sacrifice will be weighed and measured before any commitment of lives is made and, then, only after military commanders have provided a full evaluation of risks, a prediction of the likelihood of achieving objectives, and an assessment of the costs.

43. 2008 Resolution to Withdraw Troops from Iraq

District 11

WHEREAS, the United States has been fighting in Iraq since 2003 with no evidence of weapons of mass destruction, no evidence of Iraq's involvement in the 9/11 attack, and little to no sign that the Iraqis wish or are able to form a government friendly to the United States, and

WHEREAS, US soldiers are being killed at the rate of about one per day, together with uncounted numbers of Iraqis,

WHEREAS, this undeclared, illegal war is costing the US enormous sums of money that could be better used in the US for education, infrastructure and medical care,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party of North Carolina support the prompt withdrawal of US forces from Iraq, consistent with ensuring the safety of US troops.

44. In Support of Full Implementation of the Recommendations of the Bipartisan Study Commission on Iraq

District 11

WHEREAS, The United States continues to lose American lives in Iraq in a war that has also cost unnumbered thousands of Iraqi lives; and,

WHEREAS, The United States Congress continues to vote funding for this war; and,

WHEREAS, The status of the U.S. economy is in critical decline.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the United States immediately implement the full plan of the Bipartisan Study Commission on Iraq; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States Congress exercise its constitutional oversight responsibilities on the conduct of the war in Iraq consistently, diligently, and stringently, including use of the power of the purse; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the current administration immediately provide and implement an objectively measurable and verifiable timeline for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq within three months; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that there be no expansion of U.S. involvement in any war in the Middle East; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the U.S. Congress appoint a bipartisan committee to investigate and expose fraud, waste, and profiteering in contracts supporting the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

45. Assist Displaced Iraqis

District 2

WHEREAS, the estimates of Iraqis refugees, both internal and external to Iraq, are well over 4.5 million and representing at least 14% of the total population; and

WHEREAS, a large number of these refugees left their homes with nothing more than a suitcase; and

WHEREAS, the majority of them are in dire poverty; and

WHEREAS, they are lacking in clean water, food, health care, electricity, job opportunities and security; and

WHEREAS, this situation came to be as a direct consequence of the US led invasion and occupation of Iraq; and

WHEREAS, not addressing this situation would be a moral failure on our part; and

WHEREAS, our lack of assistance will likely result in more instability and violence in the Middle East in that the role of "protector and provider" may be provided by sectarian actors in the pattern of Hamas or Hezbollah (as per Rep. Waters); **WHEREAS**, a failure to address this crisis could spell disaster for the entire region; and

WHEREAS, the country of Sweden has resettled over ten times more Iraqis than the country of the United States of America in the last fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the non-partisan Congressional Research Service said that "The impact of this level of displacement cannot be underestimated in terms of it's impact on regional stability and the potential for humanitarian suffering."; and

WHEREAS, there currently is no coordinated plan or strategy to meet this crisis; and

WHEREAS, HR 5488, the Recovery and Stability in Iraq Act of 2008, will assist in meeting our goals and basic requirements of humanity in regards to the Iraqi refugee crisis, and will provide for an Iraqi Displacement Coordinator who will report directly to the President and will identify programs that address the humanitarian needs of the displaced Iraqis and develop strategies to address those needs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the American people should help these displaced Iraqis to the best of our ability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United States of America should meet the goals that have already been established to resettle displaced Iraqis here in the United States; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party asks all Democrats in North Carolina who are elected to the US House of Representatives to co-sponsor HR 5488, the Recovery and Stability in Iraq Act of 2008.

Social Services

46. Resolution to Protect Social Security and Medicare

Districts 6, 12 & 13

WHEREAS, President Bush and his special interest allies in the pharmaceutical and health insurance industries have (1) set the stage for phasing all of Medicare into a privatized program, (2) manufactured a Social Security “crisis” and (3) created crushing deficits that pose a major threat to Medicare and Social Security; and

WHEREAS, Seniors have every reason to be outraged in that Medicare Part B premiums have risen higher in dollar amounts under the Bush Administration than during all other years combined since the Medicare program began and yet another round of rate hikes devouring an increasingly larger chunk of Seniors’ Social Security COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment) is planned, while the government literally *overpays* private drug and insurance plans with billions of dollars in subsidies; and

WHEREAS, *all* beneficiaries, including those in traditional Medicare plans, are paying *higher Medicare premiums* to finance exorbitant subsidies going to the alphabet soup of private Medicare Advantage plans, such as HMOs, PPOs, PFFS plans; said subsidies will total tens of billions of dollars this year alone and are projected to total \$149 billion over the next 10 years, with \$40 billion going to drug companies; and said billions of dollars in subsidies will cut 2 years from Medicare’s solvency; and

WHEREAS, millions of seniors are *already* losing up to 100% of their 2007 Social Security COLA after last year’s Medicare premium hike; and another round of increases is anticipated in January, 2009, and is a trend that is bound to continue if Congress does not act soon; and

WHEREAS, the need is clear: The Bush Administration’s policies and plans erode the very foundation of both the Social Security and the Medicare Programs; and the 2008 Presidential Candidates owe America’s seniors the truth about how they will handle these ongoing threats to seniors’ programs and benefits;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party hereby urges the Democratic Party at all levels to wage a full-scale effort *NOW* to make protecting the Social Security and Medicare Programs a top priority for all 2008 Presidential Candidates and to strongly lobby the U.S. Congress to pass legislation amending the Medicare Modernization (Privatization) Act of 2003 in the following manner:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such legislation to allow seniors to get prescription drugs directly from Medicare while requiring Medicare to negotiate the lowest prices for seniors just like the Veteran’s Administration must be enacted in the next Congress, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such legislation eliminate government subsidies to insurance companies, freeing up funds to close the costly “donut hole” coverage gap in Medicare, Part D; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such legislation eliminate any subsidies and any other unfair competitive advantages to Medicare Advantage insurers, eliminating the drain of millions of dollars from the Medicare trust fund and eliminating any unfair competitive advantage with traditional Medicare; and such legislation should also prohibit any deceptive sales tactics, misinformation or other misleading information to consumers; and

FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party and its members urgently lobby the U.S. Congress to pass the Children’s’ Health and Medicare Protection Act of 2007 which incorporates health benefits for children and corrects the existing flaws in the Medicare Law.

*(The Medicare Part B monthly premium has climbed 73% from 2002, when it was \$54.00 per month, until 2007, when it was \$93.50 per month.

47. Resolution in Support of National Housing Trust Fund

District 12

WHEREAS, A portion of Freddie Mac and Fannie May profits can be used for a budget neutral National Housing Trust Fund providing for affordable housing for our lowest income citizens;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party encourages our federal representatives to vote for and work for passage of the bill that provides for the National Housing Trust Fund.

48. Resolution in Support of National Housing Trust Fund

Districts 6, 13

WHEREAS, A portion of Freddie Mac and Fannie May profits can be used for a budget neutral National Housing Trust Fund providing for affordable housing for our lowest income citizens;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party encourages our federal representatives to vote for and work for passage of the bill that provides for the National Housing Trust Fund.

49. Facilitating Prisoner Reentry

Districts 2, 4 & 13

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Correction (DOC) last year released more than 27,000 prisoners; and

WHEREAS, treatment programs for substance abuse have proven effective in helping prisoners achieve recovery, and

recovery is a strong predictor of successful prisoner reentry, but many prisoners lack access to adequate treatment; and

WHEREAS, vocational and educational programs for prisoners have proven to be effective in preparing prisoners to obtain employment and work successfully upon release, and many prisoners lack access to such programs; and

WHEREAS, opportunities for prisoners to work outside prison during their periods of incarceration under work release programs have been remarkably effective in allowing prisoners to learn and improve job skills, demonstrate their competence, save money and thereby transition smoothly to civilian society;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges the General Assembly to authorize the North Carolina Department of Correction to increase:

1. Mental health and substance abuse services in the State prison system with a full continuum of care throughout incarceration by providing additional residential beds at medium custody prison facilities,
2. Inmates' access to educational and vocational training opportunities at all State prison facilities,
3. Number of work release slots for prisoners at minimum security prisons.

50. A Resolution to Create Statewide Pre-Release and Post-Release Programs to be Represented in Each County to Assist Prisoners Completing Their Terms in the Transition to Stable Jobs and Healthy Relationships with their Communities

District 13

WHEREAS, one in one hundred Americans is now serving time in a penal institution, with resulting long term damage to family, work and community relationships;

WHEREAS, each year, thousands of North Carolina citizens satisfy their penal requirements and are released from institutions, and experience severe difficulties in getting stable, living-wage jobs to support their families, due to prejudices about the limitations, work history and trustworthiness of former offender;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the North Carolina Democratic Party that the State of North Carolina establish and enhance pre-release and post-release programs for mentoring former offenders, guaranteeing them training and educational opportunities as well as transitional job opportunities in order to establish themselves in an independent, productive and stable role in their communities.

51. Mental Health Care

District 4

WHEREAS, mental health care in North Carolina has been under close scrutiny in the media and by study commissions for the past ten years, and

WHEREAS, each state hospital has been investigated or had its federal funding questioned or suspended in the past few years due to inpatient deaths or mistreatment, and

WHEREAS, mental health services and organizations have been reorganized vastly since 2004,

WHEREAS, expenditures by state offices, local management entities and in state hospitals have been cut or reduced dramatically, curtailing services for the mentally handicapped and mentally ill, and

WHEREAS, the closing of Dorothea Dix mental hospital has created a disparity between the number of beds available for inpatient referral and admission and the number of patients needing such service, and

WHEREAS, the number of beds taken out of service for mentally ill patients requiring inpatient services in the state is between two hundred and two hundred -fifty, and

WHEREAS, the funding is designed to pay state facilities for inpatient services, but not private facilities, and

WHEREAS, insurance support for mental health services is inconsistent between insurance companies, some not offering any program or payment for such services,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the passage of a version of HB 1424 and/or SB 558, currently in committee to resolve differences between the House and the Senate bills, both passed in the 2007-8 session. Further, we urge that the government of North Carolina place its full weight behind this resolution in order to open the doors for full services for the mentally handicapped and the mentally ill in both public and private facilities.

52. Resolution Alleviating Poverty

District 13

WHEREAS, government poverty standards and measures of inflation are off the mark, and

WHEREAS, the low income Americans represent the same economic challenges faced by most Americans, and

WHEREAS, the low income Americans are not an isolated, struggling part of society in general; and

WHEREAS, too many view the predicament of low income Americans as their own fault; and

WHEREAS, to be champions of low income Americans we must remedy this ignorance.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party will confront vigorously the Republican Party's passion for the extremely well-to-do and its indifference to the economic insecurity of the low income Americans including the small businessman who is one payroll from bankruptcy, the college

graduate with huge debt, wage earner with stagnant wages, and the disappointed retiree.

53. Resolution on Family Planning Services

District 11

WHEREAS, the United States Government, under President George W. Bush, has denied assistance for and restrained availability of family planning services at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, the root cause of many of the world's serious problems can be traced to population growth,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party encourages family planning, including the availability of contraceptives, for all peoples of the United States and the world.

Economy & Workers Rights

54. Resolution in Support of the Farm Worker Organization FLOC in its Appeal to RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company to Negotiate with FLOC to Improve Farm Workers' Lives

District 4

WHEREAS, the successful 2004 negotiation by the farm worker organization the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) with the N.C. Growers Association (NCGA) and Mt. Olive Pickle Company resulted in a contract that vastly improved the lives of 7,000 N.C. farm workers, which contract was renewed in February 2008;

WHEREAS, other major corporations, including Campbell's Soup, Vlasic, Dean Foods, McDonalds and Hardees have successfully negotiated similar three-way contracts with farm workers and farmer-suppliers of the corporation, to the benefit of farm workers;

WHEREAS, the 7,000 farm workers covered by the FLOC-NCGA contract comprise a small fraction of the estimated 150,000 migrant farm workers who come to North Carolina;

WHEREAS, N.C. migrant farmworkers not protected by a contract live in poverty, face racism and harassment, lethal pesticides, staggering debt, and have few labor and human rights protections;

WHEREAS, government regulatory agencies have, for more than 60 years, failed to substantially improve the living and working conditions of N.C. migrant farm workers, as tragically illustrated by the deaths of nine farm workers in N.C. tobacco fields in the past two years, primarily of heat stroke;

WHEREAS, many N.C. migrant farm workers plant, cultivate and harvest tobacco, but no individual tobacco farmer has the

power to unilaterally act to improve farm worker living and working conditions, for fear of loss of competitiveness;

WHEREAS, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company is the second-largest tobacco company in the United States, manufacturing about one of every three cigarettes sold in the country, with 2006 sales in excess of \$8.5 billion worldwide, buying much of its raw commodity from N.C. tobacco farmers;

WHEREAS, RJR Tobacco alone has the economic power to change the labor practices of its farmer suppliers, thereby improving farm workers' lives;

WHEREAS, RJR CEO Susan Ivey has rejected the request to meet with FLOC president Baldemar Velasquez; and

WHEREAS, the National Democratic Party has declared its support for unions in the 2004 platform: "We will ensure that the right to organize a union exists in the real world, not just on paper, because that's how we create more jobs that can support families. That means reforming our labor laws to protect the rights of workers (including public employees) to bargain contracts and organize on a level playing field without interference";

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party declare their support of FLOC and publicly urge RJR CEO Susan Ivey to meet and negotiate in good faith with FLOC.

55. Jobs

District 5

WHEREAS, millions of Americans are underemployed or unemployed,

WHEREAS, the manufacturing industries lost will likely return slowly, if at all

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, to institute programs and tax structures that are supportive to small business development.

56. Resolution in Support of Collective Bargaining Rights to Public Employees

Districts 2, 4, 5, 6, 12, 13

WHEREAS, the Platform of the North Carolina Democratic Party states: "We reassert our fundamental belief in the collective bargaining process as a means of serving the interests of both public and private employees and employers. Those interests include better productivity, fair and adequate employee compensation and benefits, and safe, harmonious, and healthy working conditions"; and

WHEREAS, public employees in our state have for too long been denied this fundamental right to collectively bargain for improvement of their wages and working conditions;

WHEREAS, the National Democratic Party declares all workers should be entitled to collective bargaining rights.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports H1583, legislation which restores collective bargaining rights to public employees, as a major priority in the upcoming legislative session and strongly urges our Democratic legislators to pass said legislation and urges Governor Easley to sign it.

57. Resolution Relative to Fiscal Responsibility in North Carolina

District 11

WHEREAS, we, Democrats and Citizens of North Carolina believe that tax money should be used only for the purpose of performing essential functions of the state and

WHEREAS, we support the Democratic Party principle of Fiscal Responsibility

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Legislature fund only those activities absolutely necessary to perform functions that can only be performed by The State and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State Legislature use its oversight authority to ensure that those functions absolutely necessary to the operation of the government are run efficiently and effectively.

Miscellaneous Concerns

58. Resolution Relative to Toll Roads in North Carolina

District 11

WHEREAS, we, Democrats and Citizens of North Carolina Oppose the ownership and/or operation, either private or public, of toll roads, bridges or any other highway facilities anywhere in the State of North Carolina.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Legislature should enact legislation to permanently prohibit the Construction or use of Toll roads, Toll bridges or other Toll facilities on the highways of North Carolina.

59. Resolution Requiring Open Meetings in County Commissions

District 11

North Carolina Law: § 143-318.9. Public Policy

WHEREAS, it is the public policy of North Carolina that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of the government be conducted openly. However, state law contradicts this good advice when it allows closed meetings to discuss industrial relocation “incentives” that are paid with tax funds.

WHEREAS, the people deserve and require that any business that affects the health and environment of the citizenry should be fully disclosed, and;

WHEREAS, counties have used closed meetings with corporations seeking public tax incentives to prevent citizens from informing themselves or expressing their concerns regarding the history, background, and intentions of these non-citizen, for-profit only corporate entities, and;

WHEREAS, closed meetings with non citizen corporations places elected officials at odds with the very citizens they purport to serve, and;

WHEREAS, poor decisions resulting in adverse effects on health, environment, and the economy of our communities has resulted from the lack of citizen input caused by closed meetings and lack of public oversight, and;

WHEREAS, corporations have had a history of bribing officials with business trips (paid vacations), revolving door job opportunities and lucrative business associations that take place more easily behind closed doors, and;

WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson correctly said, “I know of no safe depository of the ultimate power of society but the people themselves, and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion.”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in every County and all levels of state government there shall be no closed meetings to discuss potential industry processes or incentives that may affect the health, environment or economy of the citizenry. The only closed meetings allowed shall be in cases of employment or pending law suits.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the following North Carolina law § 143-318.11. Regarding permitted closed sessions shall be null and void:

“(a) Permitted Purposes (4) To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations.”

60. Resolution to Restore the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as an Independent Agency

Districts 5 & 12

WHEREAS, the original mission of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), under executive order 12127 given by President Jimmy Carter in 1979, was to prepare for, and prevent and respond to and recover from all domestic disasters whether natural or man made; and

WHEREAS, FEMA was a separate agency with a mission to help a full range of emergencies such as disaster relief, recovery, and mitigation programs; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the agency was changed in 2001 by President George Bush and absorbed into the Department

of Homeland Security and rendered all but useless as exposed by the response to the disaster of hurricane Katrina; and

WHEREAS, fighting terrorists requires a different response than fighting disasters natural or manmade;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the restoration of FEMA as an independent agency,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party supports the immediate removal of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) from the Department of Home Land Security and returned to its original mission to serve the American people in a time of disastrous need.

61. Relations with Iran

District 4

WHEREAS, there has been increasing public concern about the intentions of the Bush administration regarding Iran, caused particularly by its assertions that Iran is a participant in the war against American forces in Iraq and that Iran is attempting to develop a nuclear capability that would threaten the United States and its allies, and

WHEREAS, this administration's track record suggests that it might, by design and/or ineptness, become involved in hostilities with Iran,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party declares its position that the United States and its elected officials should undertake every reasonable effort to resolve any difficulties with the Islamic Republic of Iran by peaceful means, insisting that legitimate American concerns be given due consideration by the Iranian government, but recognizing that the United States must be attentive to legitimate Iranian concerns as well; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this declaration be communicated to North Carolina's elected representatives in Washington.

62. For Re-establishment of a Government of Laws

District 4

WHEREAS, the United States Constitution establishes a Republic of laws rather than of persons; and

WHEREAS, significant lawbreaking has occurred over the last seven years by powerful interests, ranging from massive fraud in lucrative government contracts, to perjury before Congress to destruction of evidence in ongoing investigations, to the partisan political use of prosecutorial powers to arrest and indict Democratic elected officials, to the Republican George Bush's signing statements affirming that he will not execute laws passed by Congress, to the Republican Attorney General's refusal to investigate or prosecute internal criminal actions; and

WHEREAS, the government is attempting to remove all hope of justice for citizens who may sue lawbreakers for damages by granting retroactive immunity to well-connected telecoms, an attempt that suggests that the justice system is for sale and therefore unworthy of respect;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges all Democratic members of Congress to pursue all avenues to re-establish a government of laws that apply to all without distinction of wealth and position and that therefore merit respect; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges all Democratic members of Congress to refuse any blanket immunity for lawbreaking prior to a thorough investigation, and subsequent to a full investigation not grant immunity, but recommend a pardon for reasons that are fully and openly explained to the American people in a way that demonstrates that immunity has not been bought; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party urges all Democratic members of Congress to actively practice oversight of the executive branch in accordance with their Constitutional responsibilities.

63. Constitution/Checks and Balances

District 5

WHEREAS, the current executive branch of our national government has consistently taken independent action while excluding the legislative branch of government,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the new administration immediately present itself in a leadership role so that each agency and the members of congress will take the necessary steps to undo or remedy such actions so they never represent precedent.

64. Support of the National Aeronautical and Space Administration

District 11

WHEREAS, NASA has been an inspiration to generations of Americans, and

WHEREAS, NASA continues to be an inspiration, and

WHEREAS, NASA returns seven dollars back to the American people for every dollar spent on NASA, and

WHEREAS, NASA depends on congressional funding to continue its mission,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls upon the Congress to provide for the adequate funding of NASA.

65. Safe at Home / Ready Abroad

District 13

WHEREAS, disengagement in Iraq is only the first step for the Democratic Party and for a vulnerable, but still strong, America; and

WHEREAS, a dangerous security gap exists in America; 9/11 demonstrated the gap; decisions, following 9/11, widened it; and

WHEREAS, Republicans can be fairly charged as lax on security, unwilling to pay the costs, preferring tax breaks and costly war, grown counterproductive; and

WHEREAS, America can prevail; our capacity has been tested. Now and in the future, a total effort - prevention, preparation, mitigation and recovery - will be the measures of security success; and

WHEREAS, the nation should and will have little patience for officials who leave it unprepared when the next terrorist shoe drops, when nature again demonstrates her might, or when widespread disease breaks out - Twice burned, once foolish; and

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party recognizes the Nation's strength lies at home within the country and its people; and

WHEREAS, the Nation must end the disregard and neglect of our domestic needs which is destroying the foundation of the Nation's strength and capacity to remain secure; and

WHEREAS, Americans must be prepared to face disasters with a sense of community readiness. Bush, Cheney and their families have plans for their protection. What about our families and neighbors; and

WHEREAS, closing the security gap requires not only thwarting threats and recovering from disasters, it also requires insuring domestic needs are fully met so that a prosperous and healthy Nation is ready to confront foreign dangers, economically, diplomatically, and militarily; and

WHEREAS, the first duty of government is the people's security.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party promises a Nation, Safe at Home I Ready Abroad, with security based upon personal safety and well-being, community preparedness and prosperity, and national strength and determination to remain the beacon of the fundamental freedoms of humans "everywhere in the world": freedom of speech and expression; freedom of every person to worship in their own way; freedom from want; and freedom from fear.

66. Ending United States Use and Sponsorship of Torture

District 4

WHEREAS, acts of torture violate United States criminal laws, specifically the federal Anti-Torture Statute and the Federal War Crimes Act of 1996, and they violate

international treaties to which the United States is a party, including the Geneva Conventions, the Convention Against Torture, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and

WHEREAS, all acts of torture, regardless of circumstance, are immoral, unjustified, and illegal; and

WHEREAS, the right to be free of torture is a fundamental human right recognized in both constitutional and international law; and

WHEREAS, United States sanctioned torture is not justified by our national security needs, as it engenders hatred against the nation, does not keep the country safe, shames the nation, endangers United States troops abroad and citizens at home and is proven not to work: and

WHEREAS, sub-contractors of the United States Government including Aero Contractors Ltd., situated in Johnston and Lenoir counties of North Carolina among others, acting on behalf of the United States, have been implicated beyond reasonable doubt in the practice of facilitating torture by providing "extraordinary rendition" services (illegal kidnapping and transport of suspects to countries where torture is routine);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls on the national leadership to eradicate current torture practices by the United States in Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantanamo as well as in United States controlled prison facilities elsewhere; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls on United States Senators Elizabeth Dole and Richard Burr and the North Carolina delegation in Congress to ban the United States policies and practices of torture through appropriate and immediate legislative restraints, including specifically the prohibition of CIA detainee transport by Aero Contractors Ltd and others; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls on North Carolina legislators to support passage of HB 2417, the "Crimes of Torture and Enforced Disappearance," sponsored by Representative Paul Luebke and others, the language and intent of which was approved by the NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission on March 7, 2008; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls upon the Governor, the Attorney General of North Carolina and the NC State Legislature to investigate, to report to the People of North Carolina, and to prosecute if any of these alleged activities have violated N.C. law.

67. Resolution to End Warrantless Wiretapping, to End Withholding Legal Counsel from Prisoners and for Strict Adherence to the Geneva Convention and the Elimination of the Torture of Prisoners

District 6, 12 & 13

WHEREAS, the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution protects our privacy, the Sixth Amendment provides for the right of Counsel, and the Eighth Amendment forbids cruel and unusual punishment;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls for an end to warrantless wiretapping, the withholding of legal counsel from all prisoners under United States control, and the torture of prisoners and calls for the strict adherence to the Geneva Convention.

68. Resolution War in Colombia

District 11

WHEREAS, Plan Colombia has been in place for over eight years, and was intended to offer both military and humanitarian aid to the Colombian government in its effort to fight drug traffic, and has been funded at approximately a billion dollars a year; and

WHEREAS, A true evaluation will show that drug traffic has greatly increased during the life of this plan, and very little of the money has gone toward humanitarian efforts, while 3.6 million people have been displaced off of farms into crowded city slums, as their food crops were destroyed by aerial spraying of suspected coca plants; and

WHEREAS, An average of 30,000 civilians are killed each year, and more than 300,000 have died in the last fifteen years, mainly due to heightened violence as a result of the infusion of arms, money, and training to the Colombian army.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party refuse to support President Bush's upcoming request for renewal and continued funding for Plan Colombia, noting instead that the resources would be better spent on narcotics education and the treatment of drug addiction here in the U.S.

69. For Internet neutrality

Districts 2, 4 & 13

WHEREAS, the Internet developed with significant public support and has come to constitute a valuable public infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, commercial providers of internet access are seeking power to limit internet use by imposing differential fees that would remove the ability of citizens, non-profit groups, small businesses, and other non-moneyed interests to use the infrastructure;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic members of Congress uphold the current requirement of net neutrality, by legislation if necessary.

70. Resolution to Clarify Corporations are not People

Districts 2, 4, 11 and 13

WHEREAS, The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, together with the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, were adopted soon after the end of the War Between the States for the purpose of securing the rights of recently freed slaves and all persons without regard to skin color or national origin or previous condition of servitude,

WHEREAS, through a series of errors the Fourteenth Amendment has been said to apply to corporations in such as way as to result in corporations acquiring rights and powers never contemplated by the Founding Fathers;

WHEREAS, it is deemed essential to the preservation of the republican form of government created by the Federal Constitution, that corporations be divested of those extraordinary powers which flowed from the erroneous interpretation of said Fourteenth Amendment which gave rise the misinterpretation of said Amendment which was believed to have declared that the word "person" in said Fourteenth Amendment included corporate entities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this convention proposes that the following amendment be added to the Constitution of the United States:

1. The word "Person, wherever it appears in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, means natural born persons only, and does not apply to any other form of legal entity.
2. Any legal decisions or legislative action made or adopted following the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States which purport to extend the meaning of the word "person" in said Amendment so as to include any entities other than natural born persons is hereby declared void and of no effect.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party calls for a reexamination of corporate law and the relative rights given to corporations and individuals.

71. Resolution on Darfur

District 7

WHEREAS, over 400,000 people have been killed in the Darfur region of the Sudan;

WHEREAS, over 2.3 million people have fled from their homes to avoid being killed,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party calls on all elected officials in the United States government to take all possible actions to stop the genocide in Darfur;

AND THEREFORE BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that we urge all Democrats to frequently visit the web site

www.SaveDarfur.com to keep ourselves up to date on the fast-changing developments in the tragedy in Darfur.

72. Resolution Supporting the Regional Rail Plan

District 4

WHEREAS, the shelved regional rail plan developed by Triangle Transit Authority (TTA) has “risen from the dead” thanks to a three-county citizens advisory board, this also included mayors, city council members, and county commissioners.

WHEREAS, it is expected that urban growth across a three-county suburban region (Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill) will be approximately 800,000 residents by 2030.

WHEREAS, TTA found the region may experience problems effecting its livability and mobility due to highway congestion and lack of alternative transportation choices.

WHEREAS, Charlotte, N.C., with a new rail system, has seen success since the rail came online late last year. This was possible due to the support of voters, taxpayers, and developers.

WHEREAS, it is long overdue that the Triangle region have better bus services, more Express buses — extending to outlying towns with the ultimate goal of having a regional rail system. All of which is to entice commuters to park their cars.

WHEREAS, if we who live here want to be “green,” we must be willing to support and pay for regional mass transit. (www.newsobserver.com/news/story/923977.html) (www.ridetta.org/Regional_Rail/Overview/projectOverview.html);

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party support the efforts of regional leaders and TTA to bring forth a revitalized bus and rail system.

73. In Support of a Dialogue on Values among Members of the N.C. Democratic Party

District 11

WHEREAS, Many in the Democratic Party are inspired and motivated by their core values, or religious traditions, or their

spirituality to work for the objectives of social and economic justice, protection of Earth, and peace; and,

WHEREAS, The American people hunger for leadership that embodies truthfulness, recognition and respect for transcendent values, and devotion to purposes beyond narrow self interest, materialism, power, and dominance; and,

WHEREAS, The misuse of religion must be challenged when it supports selfish interests, when it stands for the rich and powerful over the needs of the poor, when it fails to support stewardship of Earth, when it is intolerant, and when it neglects or subverts international peace and justice; and,

WHEREAS, The “Old Bottom Line” that seeks money, power, and domination above all else is corrosive to our society, harmful to our spirits, and destructive of our nation; and,

WHEREAS, A “New Bottom Line” that judges institutions, practices, actions, and policies by criteria consistent with the best of our values, religious traditions, and deepest spirituality — to maximize compassion, kindness, generosity, ethical soundness, ecological care and sustainability, justice, nonviolence, peace, and good global citizenship — is essential for America to regain its moral stature, and again to be secure and a beacon of hope for the world; and,

WHEREAS, The Democratic Party, in order to achieve such noble goals for our country and the world, must assure that authentic values, spiritual ideals, inspirations, and energies are acknowledged, respected, and infused into its everyday efforts; and,

WHEREAS, The initial Democratic Values Dialogue conducted in 2007 proved very productive, educated participants (especially newcomers), promoted unity and cooperation, and energized them to take actions in support of the Party; and,

WHEREAS, Building on the work of the initial Values Dialogue, new opportunities for dialogue on values among additional Democrats will strengthen and energize the Party.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Executive Committees at all levels of the North Carolina Democratic Party encourage and support dialogue on values among its members at all levels.

With a Recommendation for Additional Discussion

Party Organization

74. A Resolution to Reform Democratic Presidential Nomination System

Districts 2, 4 & 13

WHEREAS, the current presidential nomination system can be unfair and undemocratic; and

WHEREAS, there is no uniform voting system among the different states, some with a primary, some with a caucus and some with both; and

WHEREAS, some states receive unfair and disproportionate influence due to the date of their elections or the system of voting; and

WHEREAS, the dates and formats of the Democratic nomination voting is determined by the state party or the state legislature, which is often controlled by the opposing party, and this has resulted in violations by some states which causes confusion and may result in some states not being represented; and

WHEREAS, it is possible that the winner of the most popular votes and the most elected pledged delegates will not receive the Democratic nomination for President;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party calls for complete reform of the nomination process, to include consideration of: abolishing super delegates, uniform voting procedures, a rotating regional primary system, a one day national primary, condensed primary schedule, and the winner of the nomination being the candidate with a plurality of popular votes nationally.

75. Resolution about Super Delegates: Super Delegates Vote as Majority State Vote

District 13

WHEREAS, the Democratic Party arrives at a situation where the NC Super delegates are called upon to decide the nominee for President,

WHEREAS, a presidential primary was held in NC on May 6th and a winner was determined

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that all super delegates should support the popularly elected nominee by unanimously casting their votes for the winner of the NC primary.

76. Resolution to Restore Election Integrity by Opposing Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)

District 12

WHEREAS, supporters of Instant Runoff Voting (hereinafter “IRV”), a form of Ranked Choice Voting (hereinafter “RCV”), succeeded in getting an IRV pilot program passed in 2006, allowing IRV to be used in up to 10 municipal elections in 2007 and up to 10 county elections in 2008, and that said law further requiring that the State Board of Elections set up closely monitor the program and report on the results to the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, supporters have been advocating IRV as election reform for years, claiming that it is “easy as 1-2-3” and superior to traditional voting methods because, among other things, it saves money over holding separate runoff elections while still ensuring majority winners; and

WHEREAS, there was no additional money either asked for by the State Board of Elections (hereinafter “SBOE”) or provided by the General Assembly to set up and evaluate IRV during the pilot program; and

WHEREAS, because there was no money for the IRV pilot, outside advocacy groups that lobbied for passage of the IRV pilot had enormous amount of influence over the establishment of procedures for counting IRV votes, setting up and implementing voter education methods and performing exit poll surveys using partisan IRV supporters as pollsters; and

WHEREAS, one outside advocacy group provided “scholarship” money to send a SBOE staffer to Scotland in May 2007 to observe the Scottish Ranked Choice Voting, which had a national average 5% rate of spoiled ballots because of factors that included the complexity of the Scottish Ranked Choice ballot; and

WHEREAS, the SBOE staffer with no previous training or observation of RCV methods participated in the writing of a report of the May 2007 Scottish election that included an successful evaluation of the RCV method she was being sent over to learn about; and

WHEREAS, the SBOE staffer that was sent to Scotland was based in Raleigh and at no time observed IRV counting procedures for the Cary IRV election at the Wake County Board of Elections; and

WHEREAS, there was no real unbiased attempt made using scientific methodology to study the effectiveness of IRV compared to other voting methods, leaving voter education to be done under the table with volunteer labor provided by IRV supporters, with no accounting for costs for voter education and the more complicated IRV ballots casting and counting procedures; and

WHEREAS, even though many pro-IRV supporters claimed that IRV was a success in North Carolina, the informal survey conducted by IRV supporters still showed that 25% of Cary voters and 35% of Hendersonville voters – the only two NC municipalities that used IRV in 2007 elections - didn’t know

they would be expected to rank more than one candidate per race before coming to vote; and

WHEREAS, the only place where IRV was used to count votes and declare a winner was in Cary, NC, where the declared winner did not achieve a majority (50% plus 1 vote); and

WHEREAS, the IRV sort/stack and count procedures were so complex that the Wake County Board of Elections, one of the most professional and respected in the state, could not follow the procedures to accurately count hand-count the second and third choices out of approximately 3,000 first-choice votes, and later had to re-sort and recount said ballots out of the public eye; and

WHEREAS, IRV is so complex a method of casting and counting votes that it required the State Board of Elections to design work-arounds and other apparent violations of North Carolina elections law, (including the Public Confidence in Elections Act), in order to make IRV appear to be easy, and

WHEREAS, county participation in the IRV pilot for 2008 might mean two different ballots for some counties, resulting in the same sort of confusion and spoiled ballots that occurred in Scotland in May 2007; and

WHEREAS, the three and one-half hours it took Wake County to process 3,000 IRV vote would translate to over 9 weeks in a county-wide election of 300,000 votes for Wake County Commissioner; and

WHEREAS, there are thankfully no counties that are going to participate in the IRV pilot project for 2008,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party and elected and appointed Democratic officials urge the North Carolina General Assembly not to extend the IRV pilot project beyond 2008, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party and elected and appointed Democratic officials urge the North Carolina General Assembly hereby withhold any further endorsement of IRV and oppose IRV because it has endangered Public Confidence in Elections in North Carolina.

77. Resolution In Support Of Instant Run-Off Voting

District 11

WHEREAS, Democrats recognize the importance of fair and democratic elections, and

WHEREAS, single-member plurality elections allow for the election of a candidate who was not voted for by the majority of voters, and

WHEREAS, a system of Instant Run-off Voting (IRV) would prevent this by making sure that the will of the majority is expressed in the outcome of elections,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Democrats support the use of IRV in all of its single-member elections where there are 3 or more candidates, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, if there are more than 2 persons running for a single office, Instant Run-Off Voting shall be used: Each voter shall rank the candidates in order of most to least preferred. A candidate receiving more than 50% of first-choice votes wins the election. In the case that no candidate receives more than 50% of the first-choice votes, the candidate receiving the fewest number of first-choice votes shall be eliminated and ballots listing that candidate as their first choice shall be recounted using their second choice candidate. This process shall repeat until one candidate receives more than 50% of the votes."

78. In Support of Ending All Contributions by Registered Lobbyists to Candidates and Encouraging Public Funding in all Elections

District 11

WHEREAS, True democracy is founded on the worth of every person and the right of everyone to a full and equal voice; and,

WHEREAS, True democracy is necessarily transparent in its operations; and,

WHEREAS, Political campaign contributions in the form of cash or other monetary instruments from interested parties have a tendency to undermine the equality necessary for the successful operation of a democracy or a republic, giving undue influence to those persons of wealth who contribute the most; and,

WHEREAS, Political campaign contributions render opaque the operations of power and leave the people deceived with respect to their influencing in the political process.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that there be public funding for all state and federal elections in the state of N.C.; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that there be public forums available for such elections to provide adequate opportunity for all candidates to make their views known to the electorate; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that all direct and indirect financial contributions from registered lobbyists be prohibited at all times.

Environment

79. Resolution to eliminate subsidies for poultry manure incinerators

District 5

WHEREAS, in 2007 the NC General Assembly approved an energy bill, Session Law 2007-397—Ratified Senate Bill 3 (S3), which included subsidies poultry manure incineration, and

WHEREAS, the renewable energy standard in S3 requires North Carolina to produce 900 thousand megawatt hours of electric power a year by burning poultry manure, and

WHEREAS, the NC Division of Air Quality confirms that burning poultry manure would emit more air pollution than a modern coal-fired power plant, and

WHEREAS, the NC Agricultural Extension Service says that fertilizer prices have increased 40% since 2007; burning poultry manure would harm farmers by destroying a valuable fertilizer,

WHEREAS, energy policy should enhance environment quality and improve public health,

THEREFORE, the North Carolina Democratic Party hereby calls upon the North Carolina General Assembly to amend S3 to eliminate support for poultry manure incinerators.

Human Rights & Free Speech

80. Resolution to Abolish the Death Penalty

Districts 6, 12 & 13

WHEREAS, a large number of those persons sentenced to death in North Carolina have been later proven to be innocent; and

WHEREAS, objective analysis has shown that the death penalty has not been applied equally;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party advocates the abolishment of the death penalty or, at a minimum, the continuation of the moratorium on executions in North Carolina.

Iraq/Military

81. Resolution Regarding the Military Recruitment of Minors

District 4

WHEREAS, minors under eighteen cannot enlist in the military without parental permission, and as a society we deny other rights to minors such as voting, signing contracts, purchasing alcohol and cigarettes, or making certain medical or legal decisions, and

WHEREAS, sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds are routinely urged by military recruiters to commit themselves to future enlistment after their eighteenth birthday, and these ages are too young for many individuals to comprehend and evaluate fully the consequences of their decisions, and

WHEREAS, military recruiters have both the incentive and resources to promote military service by stressing its positive aspects and down-playing its costs, and

WHEREAS, federal legislation, particularly the No Child Left Behind Act, mandates that “every local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to post secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party hereby expresses its disapproval of attempts by military recruiters to urge or extract any form of commitment for military service prior to an individual’s eighteenth birthday and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Party calls upon North Carolina’s elected representatives in Congress to amend the No Child Left Behind Act to prohibit the recruitment or solicitation of commitments for military service from minors, whether this be on school property or outside of school property, unless the minor initiates without prompting, inquiries or commitments for military service.

Miscellaneous Concerns

82. Urging the N.C. Democratic Party to Support Creation of a Federal Department of Peace and Nonviolence

District 11

WHEREAS, On February 5, 2007, House Bill 808 was introduced in the United States House of Representatives to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence, which to date has garnered the sponsorship of sixty-seven (69) members of the United States House of Representatives (as of March 11, 2008); and

WHEREAS, The proposed legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will establish a cabinet-level department that will be headed by a Secretary of Peace and Nonviolence, who will advise the President on issues both domestic and international in scope, giving peace building a place, voice and budget at the highest levels of government; and

WHEREAS, The proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit North Carolina by holding peace as an organizing principle for American society, and by providing adequate funding for peace building initiatives which aim to change the tone of society from a culture of disrespect and violence toward a culture of respect and nonviolence; and

WHEREAS, The proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the State of North Carolina by supporting existing programs and developing new programs to address and reduce

the number and frequency of incidents related to domestic violence, child and spousal abuse, school violence, gang violence, gun violence, and hate crimes which will assist members of our Police Departments in experiencing fewer dangerous encounters especially while making routine runs; and

WHEREAS, The proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the State of North Carolina by developing and distributing to the states and their schools a peace and nonviolence curriculum with supportive materials for community building, communication, nonviolent conflict resolution, and mediation information, skills and resources; and

WHEREAS, The proposed federal legislation to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the State of North Carolina by encouraging and

supporting development of conflict resolution and violence prevention initiatives from within the community, including its religious and non-governmental organizations, thus creating greater community involvement and thereby a strong, stable, cohesive civil society throughout the State of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Many local government agencies, including, but not limited to, Chicago, Illinois; San Francisco, California; Atlanta, Georgia; Detroit, Michigan; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Newark, New Jersey; and Cambridge, Massachusetts, have passed similar resolutions in support of the enactment of the proposed legislation.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the North Carolina Democratic Party adopts this resolution in favor of enactment of House Bill 808 to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence.