

1                   **Resolution in support of public financing of campaigns for the**  
2                   **Washington State Supreme Court**

3       **WHEREAS**, our judicial system is an essential branch of government, and is the one branch of  
4 government that must be uniquely impartial, independent and unbiased in order to best serve the  
5 residents of Washington; and

6       **WHEREAS**, the improper appearance created by money in judicial elections is one of the most  
7 important issues facing our judicial system today, and to maintain public confidence in the judiciary,  
8 we must prevent not only corruption, but also the appearance of corruption; and  
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10       **WHEREAS**, it is also important to protect the fairness of elections for the highest court in  
11 Washington state - the supreme court, and thereby to foster the public's trust in the integrity and  
12 independence of the court in the face of increasingly large sums of money raised and spent by special  
13 interest groups seeking to elect candidates to seats on the supreme court; and  
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15       **WHEREAS**, in 2006, over \$4 million was raised and spent, largely by special interest groups and  
16 donors, seeking election of favored candidates to the supreme court in Washington; and  
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18       **WHEREAS**, political campaigns are increasingly expensive and candidates for office, lacking an  
19 alternative, must take substantial private contributions from a select community of interests and  
20 individuals to keep up with the staggering costs required to compete in an election; and  
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22       **WHEREAS**, North Carolina has had a successful and popular program of public financing for  
23 judicial campaigns, since 2002, demonstrating that such a program can work, . Most candidates use  
24 the program, and they win. The result is: restored public confidence in the integrity of the judiciary,  
25 more women and diversity on the court, reflecting the population. Judges who can focus on the law,  
26 rather than needing to romance campaign financiers an Arizona study shows that clean elections  
27 greatly expanded the universe of contributors by increasing the number of contributors as well as their  
28 geographic, economic and ethnic diversity; and  
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30       **WHEREAS**, the state legislature is considering proposals, including HB 1738 filed by Rep. Marko  
31 Lias and 31 other House co-sponsors, to adopt a program of public financing of campaigns for seats  
32 on the Washington State Supreme Court, optional for candidates, and which would provide adequate  
33 sums, including "fair fight" funds, to candidates who qualify for public financing support by  
34 demonstrating reasonable voter support in a manner prescribed in the proposed bills;  
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36       **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the King County Democrats urges its legislators and the  
37 Governor to support a program of public financing for campaigns for the Washington State Supreme  
38 Court, and  
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40       **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor, to  
41 Senate Majority Leader Lisa Brown and House Speaker Frank Chopp, and to all legislators from  
42 districts wholly or partially in King County.  
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45       Passed unanimously by the King County Democratic Central Committee, January 27, 2009 at their  
46 regularly scheduled monthly meeting.  
47       Susan C. Sheary, Chair