

## Part II: HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

**Remember what it is.** Unlike a platform provision, which expresses an enduring value (held by a strong and perhaps overwhelming majority of Democrats in the district or county), a resolution addresses a current, specific problem or opportunity. It should include a call for specific action, aimed at identifiable public officials.

The resolution's message should be consistent with the organization's platform, or at least not inconsistent with it. Implementing or applying the platform is fine, but remember that a resolution must amount to more than a restatement of a platform provision.

**Be selective, factual—and *clear*.** Keep the one-page limit in mind, and include only on-point facts that will lead your audience to your desired conclusion. Do not include purported factual assertions that seem exaggerated or are readily questionable; these will suggest that your conclusions may be unsoundly based and thereby give the decision-makers an excuse to ignore your call for action. Fact-check all assertions in your "Whereas" clauses. Be clear throughout, and avoid ambiguity; use correct punctuation and overt or implicit sub-paragraphing [e.g., an (a), (b), etc.]

See the accompanying sample resolution, "Constitutional Rights for People, not Corporations." It has a short, directly pointed title. It relies solely on undisputed facts and demonstrates its consistency with the operative platform (county Democratic organization), and calls for specific action—indeed, accountability. By using "we" in its text and being set up to specify the adopting body (and date) separately, at the bottom, its content may more readily be picked up and used by other Democratic bodies (with appropriate adjustments for platform references, if any). (*Note*: Do not be deterred by the unavailability of a specific platform reference.)

### Style Notes:

- Resolutions should be submitted in MS Word .doc (not .docx) format
- Do not use line numbers
- "Whereas" and "Therefore be it resolved" should be in caps/lower case, not all capitalized, and should be in boldface with no comma after
- In case of multiple "Whereas" clauses, end all but the last with "; and"
- Indent sub-paragraphs

Sample Resolution

**Constitutional Rights for People, not Corporations**

**Whereas** the U.S. Constitution, as amended, prescribes rights and freedoms accorded to people but makes no mention of corporations; and

**Whereas** corporations are neither born nor naturalized in the United States and therefore are not entitled to the privileges or immunities accorded to U.S. citizens, and in many cases are owned in whole or in part by foreign interests that are not entitled to influence U.S. elections; and

**Whereas** a divided U. S. Supreme Court has, over the last three decades, misguidedly ruled that money is a form of speech, thus extending First Amendment protections to wealthy entities' efforts to evade and override election-campaign reforms; and

**Whereas** the corporate usurpation of free speech rights culminated recently in the Supreme Court's *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* decision, overturning longstanding precedents prohibiting corporations from spending their general treasury funds in elections and unleashing a torrent of corporate money into our political process, presenting a grave threat to our democracy and potentially to our national security; and

**Whereas** the current King County Democratic Platform, adopted April 10, 2010, declares that “[c]orporations, as artificial entities, are not entitled to the Constitutional rights of people;” and that the “Constitution must be amended to establish that corporations shall not be considered as ‘persons’ for purposes of political activity, and to reverse the pernicious notion that money equals speech;”

**Therefore, be it resolved** that we call on all our representatives in the U.S. Congress to sponsor and secure passage of, and send to the states for ratification, a Constitutional amendment to establish (1) that a corporation shall not be considered a person eligible for rights accorded to human beings under the Constitution, as amended, and (2) that the use of money to influence elections or the acts of public officials shall not be considered a protected form of speech; and

**Be it further resolved** that our Senators and Congressmembers be queried as to their actions and intended actions in furtherance of the above.

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_