

## **Department of Peace and Nonviolence**

WHEREAS, on Feb 5, 2007, House Bill 808 was introduced in the United State House of Representatives to create a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence, which to date has garnered the sponsorship of 68 members of the House of Representatives; and

WHEREAS, the proposed legislation to create a 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 a building place, voice and budget at the highest levels of government; and

WHEREAS, current levels of violence are very costly to society in the United States, the United State military budget exceeds \$600 billion dollars annually; there were 1,886,667 confirmed cases of children wounded, and 2,917 children killed, by abuse and neglect from March 2003 to April 2005 in the United States; in 2004 approximately 33% of high school students in the United States say they had been in a physical fight in the past year, and 1 in 8 of those required medical attention for their injuries; the annual estimated cost of reported violent crime in the United States was \$504 billion for 2004, and

WHEREAS, the proposed legislation to create a Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the State of Washington 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 Police Departments in Washington State in experiencing fewer dangerous encounters especially while making routine calls, and

WHEREAS, the proposed legislation to create a Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the State of Washington 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 legislation to create a Department of Peace and Nonviolence will benefit the State of Washington 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 and cohesive civil society, and

WHEREAS, many local governmental agencies, including 28 cities, including but not limited to, Atlanta, GA, Detroit, MI, Gainesville, FL, Minneapolis, MN, Newark, NJ, San Francisco, CA, Oakland, CA, and Portland, OR, have passed resolutions in support of the legislation to establish a Department of Peace and Nonviolence, and

WHEREAS, many national and international organizations, including, but not limited to, Amnesty International, Center for Nonviolent Communication, Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, Physicians for Social Responsibility, September Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Pax Christi USA, School Mediation Center, Veterans for Peace, and Youth for Environmental Sanity have endorsed the legislation to establish a Department of Peace and Nonviolence,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Washington State Democratic Party urges our Washington State Congressional Delegation to sponsor the Department of Peace and Nonviolence legislation in the United States Senate, and to co-sponsor the Department of Peace and Nonviolence legislation, HR808, in the United States House of Representatives, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Washington State Democratic Party urges our Washington State Legislature to pass a resolution in support of legislation to establish a United States Department of Peace and Nonviolence.