

WASHINGTON STATE FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC WOMEN

2005 Platform

A. EDUCATION.

1. We strongly oppose voucher and charter systems which undermine our public education system.
2. We support the passage of school levies with a simple majority rather than the 60% super majority.
3. We support increased salaries for public school and higher education employees with parity of salary and benefits for less than full-time workers.
4. We support the full funding of public education, preschool through grade 16, and/or vocational training.
5. We support the full funding of Operation Headstart.
6. We support repeal of the so-called "No Child Left Behind" act because it is unfunded and is detrimental to local educational programs. We encourage Washington State to opt out of the program.
7. We support funding of programs for historically underserved populations seeking education or job training.
8. We support reasonable teacher-student ratios which will provide an optimal learning experience for students.
9. We support the abolishment of the WASL tests as presently constituted and administered and support alternatives.
10. We support a strict anti-bullying policy that includes participatory activities and education.
11. We support the application of human rights number ten at all levels of public education.
12. We lobby our State Congressional delegation to support passage of the Student Privacy Protection Act of 2005.
13. Until the Student Privacy Protection Act of 2005 is passed by Congress, we urge all high school PTSAs to contact their students each September informing them of their right to sign and "out-out" form which would take their name off the list send by the local school districts to military recruiters.

B. GOVERNMENT.

Government's primary function is to support the well-being of people. Government will do this by:

1. Providing the following protections:
 - a. Guaranteeing an efficient, fair and responsible legal system;

- b. Implementing a progressive tax system;
 - c. Maintaining three separate and equal branches of government – executive, legislative and judicial;
 - d. Removing the “individual” status of corporation in law and making corporations responsible citizens; and
 - e. Maintaining public control over services that directly impact our health and well-being.
2. Taking the following responsibilities:
- a. Behaving in a responsible, compassionate way, and
 - b. Recognizing all sovereign and quasi-sovereign nations and their right to self-determination.
3. Maintaining the public trust by:
- a. Conducting our business in an open, fair and fiscally responsible manner; and
 - b. Requiring the legislature to fund its legislation.
4. Continually earning respect by treating people with respect and protecting their dignity.
5. Ensuring our survival by access to essential resources and services.
6. Securing our freedom and autonomy by guaranteeing personal control over our physical bodies.
7. Recognizing the interdependence of all peoples through encouraging and supporting the development of strong communities.
8. Ensuring our democracy by providing clear open and accurate partisan election processes (as stated in the 2004 Supreme Court ruling requiring political party designations).
9. Supporting our constitutional independence by maintaining a strict separation of church and state.
10. Protecting FCC policies that forbid media monopoly and ensure public ownership and access to guarantee wide points of view on important issues.
11. The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women supports the reform of international trade agreements and institutions to address the following key principles:

Trade agreements should not be used to weaken the labor, environmental, and health protections that nations have developed for their citizens and for the general environment, nor should they be used to circumvent core international standards or establish legal systems; Trade agreements should include provisions to encourage progress in labor and environmental practices; for example, by establishing standards of corporate labor and environmental accountability and by building the capacity of countries to monitor and manage labor and environmental concerns; and

Negotiations and dispute resolution activities related to trade agreements should be conducted in a democratic and open manner that ensures inclusion of labor and environmental standards and should provide standing for all involved stakeholders.

The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women opposes the proposed Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) because it neglects to address these principles.

The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women has so advised our Congressional representatives.

12. The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women shall not tolerate the blatant exploitation of Washington's citizens by the egregious practices of credit card companies, and shall find it necessary to take actions to protect our citizens from this corporate exploitation including, but not limited to:

- Prohibiting punitive "universal default" interest rates;
- Limiting the interest rate companies may charge cardholders;
- Banning issuers from changing terms without at least three billing cycle's advance notice to the consumer and the consumer's affirmative permission;
- Banning any changes to the interest rate of past purchases;
- Limiting the number of unsolicited applications that may be sent to Washington residents for credit card accounts; and
- Limiting the fees banks may charge merchants for set up and for per transaction fees.

13. The Washington Federation of Democratic Women believes all strategies for economic development must emphasize the health and prosperity of our existing businesses and enact tax policies and regulatory policies which enhance our community businesses and provide economic impact studies as rigorous as environmental impact statements whenever development plans impact our existing business communities.

The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women has so advised the Honorable Christine Gregoire and members of the Washington State Senate and House of Representatives.

14. The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women urges our Congressional delegation to prevent the passage of the full, Bush faith-based initiatives and reaffirm that the intermingling of government funds and religious activities is not only bad for democracy, but bad for the full and free expression of religious beliefs.

C. ENVIRONMENT.

1. We support development and implementation of effective and efficient mass transit systems that meet the clean air standards and significantly increase transit ridership by offering safe, fast, clean, frequent, and easily accessed public transit.
2. We support licensing and development of renewable technologies and energy plants (such as solar, wind and biodiesel) to increase affordable Pacific

Northwest electricity and encourage conservation of energy resources.

3. We support the rights of environmental groups and individual citizens to petition the federal government for rare plants and animals to be listed as endangered.
4. We support the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil and gas development and the protection of the Washington and Oregon coastline from drilling.
5. We support a moratorium on the construction of any additional logging roads on public lands and state and national forests.
6. We support laws and regulations to ensure clean air and water, uncontaminated food, and a healthy, natural environment for all, everywhere.
7. We support the Clinton Administration standards and the Clean Water Act to ensure clean drinking water including protecting our watersheds.
8. We support the U.S. Government's participation in international talks on global warming and support ratification of the Kyoto Treaty.
9. We support the rights of consumers to have informed choice and, therefore, call for the complete and honest labeling of all foods, food additives and medications.
10. We support sustainable local agriculture (i.e., small family farms) to maintain local jobs and a decentralized control of the food supply. We oppose patenting of food and seed stocks by large corporations.
11. We support maintenance of healthy, sustainable wild fish stocks rather than commercial fish farming which increases pollution, puts the health of the wild fish at risk and causes health risks to humans.
12. We support the maintenance, preservation, and completion of our high occupancy vehicle lanes within and between our cities (HOV) and the management of those lanes for carpools, vanpools, and buses to meet or exceed the Washington State Department of Transportation standard of 45 miles per hour 90% of the time.

D. HUMAN RIGHTS.

1. We support individual privacy rights and repeal of those sections of the Patriot Act that limit civil liberties and human rights.
2. We support affirmative action.
3. We support access for any person (citizen or non-citizen) to health care, housing, childcare, and job training to achieve independence.
4. We support the establishment of community-based, citizen review boards with extensive authority to address allegations of racial and other profiling.
5. We support legal recognition of the range of genders occurring in the human

species.

6. We oppose discrimination in employment, salary, housing, and public accommodations and education based on race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disabilities, color, ethnicity, gender identity, expression, national origin, or veteran status.
7. We support the speedy withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and support adequately funded, international peacekeeping forces to protect Iraqi citizens and sustain their civil society.
8. The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women joins with all other citizens of the United States in reaffirming our commitment to freedom and justice and believe that in order to achieve freedom, everyone must be treated equally, without discrimination. Further, fairness and equal treatment are inherent conditions of freedom and cannot be achieved when discrimination exists, and that we must have fairness in order to achieve freedom and equal treatment.
9. The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women calls upon the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee to move the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) onto the Senate floor.
10. The Washington State Federation of Democratic Women calls upon the national and state levels of the Democratic Party to immediately urge the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to put the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in the forefront of their policy considerations and to move this valuable instrument to the full Senate for ratification.

E. HEALTH.

1. We support preventive health care, not health care controlled by drug companies.
 - a. As part of preventive health care, we support the removal of potent bioaccumulative toxins (PBTS) such as mercury, arsenic, lead and PBDES from the human body and the environment; and
 - b. We support the removal of the registered pesticide thimerosal, containing 48% mercury from all vaccines.
2. We support a woman's freedom of choice for reproductive rights both nationally and internationally.
3. We support publicly funded research that supports women's health and is free of racial discrimination.
4. We support a single-payer healthcare system which provides universal health care without regard to previous illness or pre-existing conditions, which requires medical insurance companies to provide coverage, and which requires employers to partner financially at a reasonable level.
5. We support full funding of prescription medications for Medicare recipients.

6. We support stem cell research for medical reasons but we oppose the cloning of human beings.
7. We oppose the privatization of the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

F. LABOR.

1. We support the right of all workers to joint together and organize without interference to secure better wages and working conditions.
2. We support a living wage and cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) throughout the United States and its territories.
3. We support full funding for enforcement of employment standards, child labor laws, and work safety regulations, including the regulations to protect and compensate workers for ergonomic injuries.
4. We support using Washington workers, products, goods and services for functions occurring within the state and country rather than outsourcing to other countries or non-governmental entities.
5. We support fair trade, not free trade, and abolishing the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) because when jobs are exported then workers and the environment are exploited.
6. We oppose the use of temporary workers during strikes and further we oppose the permanent replacement of striking workers.
7. We support workers' rights to unemployment insurance when locked out by employers.
8. We support restrictions on corporate takeovers and mergers when workers are dismissed without just cause or compensation.
9. We support protection of the U.S. Social Security System and pension plans.
10. We support state and federal prevailing wage laws for all government contracts.
11. We support assistance for the working poor through access to affordable health care, housing, child care facilities 24/7 and job training/apprentice programs.
12. We support reform of the WTO in order to protect and extend American labor, environmental standards and civil rights to international trading partners.