

## RESOLUTION TO ADDRESS WASHINGTON'S HOUSING CRISIS

*UPDATED, NEGOTIATED 46<sup>th</sup> LD VERSION: 9/21/2022*

**WHEREAS**, Washington is experiencing a housing crisis due to a shortage of at least 225,000 homes needed for our population. For years, production of housing units has failed to keep up with population growth and this crisis will only worsen without legislative action as more people move to our region; and

**WHEREAS**, everyone deserves access to quality, safe, and healthy housing in the community of their choice, near their work. The high cost of housing and rents have pushed people further from jobs and their communities increasing transportation times, costs, and pollution. Workers are being priced out of their housing due to scarcity and inflation that outpaces any increases in their wages. 45 percent of Washington renters are cost burdened, spending 30 percent or more of their income on housing; and

**WHEREAS**, housing scarcity is linked to an increase in homelessness. The data is clear that high rents and low rental vacancy rates are associated with increased regional rates of homelessness. We will never solve homelessness without addressing the core cause, which is housing costs and availability; and

**WHEREAS**, housing unaffordability and homelessness disproportionately impact communities of color, women, people who identify as LGBTQ, individuals with a disability, formerly incarcerated individuals, seniors, veterans, and foster youth, of whom 33% of the latter will experience homelessness by age 21; and

**WHEREAS**, exclusionary zoning is steeped in a history of racism and segregation that unfortunately continues to prevent cities from taking meaningful action to promote housing affordability, stability, and accessibility for all. Local elected leaders across the state are hamstrung by some homeowners who do not want the character of their neighborhood to change thereby making proposals to increase density and housing options extraordinarily difficult to pass on any meaningful scale; and

**WHEREAS**, to address our housing crisis, we need an abundance of homes of all shapes and sizes that are affordable to all Washingtonians. These should include diverse, less costly options ("middle housing") such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, sixplexes, town homes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs); and

**WHEREAS**, transportation emissions are the largest source of our statewide carbon emissions. Allowing more people to live near where they work, learn, shop, and play is the most direct way to reduce trips and vehicle miles traveled and the corresponding carbon emissions; and

**WHEREAS**, more neighbors will help to support more grocery stores, shops, restaurants, child care centers, and other small businesses that make our district such a wonderful place to live; and

**WHEREAS**, middle housing types already exist throughout the 46th District, even in neighborhoods which are currently zoned for single family housing. They fit in with the fabric of the neighborhood and provide homes for students, seniors, and workers who can't afford to buy or rent a single family home; and

**WHEREAS**, access to frequent transit is a criterion for funding and siting most low-income housing, and more low-income housing is a goal; and

**WHEREAS**, California and Oregon have adopted statewide zoning legislation to increase housing capacity and build more homes;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the 46th District Democrats call upon our elected State Representatives and State Senator to propose, support, and promote legislation addressing our housing crisis, shortages, and affordability to include, but not limited to, mandating that middle housing be allowed in areas currently zoned for single family homes to promote building housing of all types that are accessible and affordable to working people, their families, and community members;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the 46th District Democrats call upon our elected State Representatives and State Senator to ensure that any such initiative – where possible – includes labor standards such as prevailing wage, apprenticeship utilization, and priority hire provisions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the 46th District Democrats call upon our elected State Representatives and State Senator to ensure that any such initiative – where possible – includes incentives to mitigate displacement of low income residents and communities of color; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the 46th District Democrats call upon our elected State Representatives and State Senator to explore use of existing and increased bonding capacity and other revenue sources for building mixed income housing; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that the 46th District Democrats hereby declares that meaningful state actions to address housing shortages, scarcity, costs, rental costs, and the resulting impacts of homelessness, shall be part of and a top priority for the 46th District Democrats' legislative and advocacy agenda.